HESITATION;

OR,

TO MARRY, OR NOT TO MARRY?

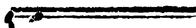
VOL. I.

HESITATION;

OR,

TO MARRY, OR NOT TO MARRY?

IN THREE VOLUMES.



Far less dismay'd, Anchises' wand'ring son
Was seen the straits of Sicily to shun:
When Palinurus, from the helm descry'd
The rocks of Scylla, on his eastern side;
While in the west, with hideous yawn disclos'd,
His onward path Charybdis' gulf oppos'd.

FALCONER.

Non hic Centauros, non Gorgonas, Harpyiasque
Invenies hominem pagina nostra sapit.

MARTIAL.



VOL. I.

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HOURS

OF

HESITATION.

CHAPTER I.

"They shall be married to-morrow; and I will bid the Duke to the nuptials. But, oh! how bitter a thing it is, to look into happiness through another man's eyes: by so much the more shall I to morrow, be at the height of heart-heaviness, by how much I shall think my brother happy, in having what he wished for." SHAKSPEARE.

"WHEN the mind's free, the body's delicate," says Shakspeare. Every one has observed that minor considerations are sunk and lost in the vortex of any great event:—it was the operation of this sentiment, that induced Philippa Egerton, regardless of the chill air of an

autumnal morning, that blew briskly across her face, to sit, wrapt in profound reverie, at the open casement of her apartment.

She was on the point of consummating that event, which forms the most important epoch in the life of woman; — of approaching that bourne, whence return is impossible; — of binding herself in those fetters, which, though silken, are so strong, that they can be loosened by nothing but the commission of crimes, from which the eye turns with loathing and horror; — or by death, from the contemplation of which, the mind of the young, the gay, and the thoughtless, shrinks aghast!

In provincial towns and their immediate neighbourhood, an heiress, from the period of her *débût* on the great theatre of life, is an object of important interest. It is a truism universally perceived, generally acknowledged, and frequently acted upon, that such females of this class, as are not supposed to possess great talents,

or capability of forming a very accurate estimate of life, are marked as the prey of the ruined speculator, the necessitous gamester, the extravagant gentleman, the dissipated coxcomb, and the dashing *militaire*. That Philippa had not become the prey of one of these, she was indebted — not to her own caution, — for Miss Egerton had *flirted* with many characters, *doubtful* at best,— but to a peculiar species of good fortune, which introduced her, — on the very verge of *negotiating* an elopement with an officer, who possessed an irresistible pair of staring black eyes, " Hyperion curls," and carefully-trimmed mustaches, — to Sir Thomas Clervaux, a trifler *only* and a fashionist!

It was at an assembly, that destiny threw over them her web, from which they were never afterwards to extricate themselves.

The Parisian professor is not a more graceful votary of Terpsichore than Sir Thomas Clervaux. The adept, who has, on a fair calculation, passed somewhat

more than half his life in the attainment of any art, regulates his estimation of it, not by its intrinsic value, but by the pains the acquirement of it has cost him.' By this scale, Sir Thomas appreciated his "*facultas saltandi.*"—Philippa Egerton's heart bounded a pace nearer to his bosom as he displayed, in succession, all the difficulties of the science; for she beheld his proficiency with feelings diametrically opposite to those, that affected Micah on witnessing the elevation of the inspired Psalmist.

Independently of general flippancy of character, Sir Thomas Clervaux and Miss Egerton possessed, perhaps, but one similarity of feeling,—the wish to be married, or, in other words, a curiosity to try a new mode of life. Their mutual *captivation* was occasioned by the fashion of either; and the consequence arising from that *captivation*, owed its existence to their desire of exhibiting to the world the splendour of bridal paraphernalia, and to each other the courtesy of polite

indifference, rather than to the purity of real affection, and to the conviction that their separation would entail on them a misery, to which any privation was preferable. The sentiments, that bound them to each other, were of such a nature, that a difference of opinion in regard to the extent of settlement, would have opposed a barrier to their union, even at the foot of the altar.

The dawn of that day possessing a *certain* importance even in Philippa's estimation, wrapt the east in its splendour. A vast congregation of clouds attended the levée of the sultry monarch. His brilliant disk appeared, at first, a fiery red "shorn of his beams," but after a short struggle, proudly surmounting every obstacle to his glory, he shone at once resplendent, and all nature triumphed in his presence.

Those very clouds, that at first obscured his lustre, and seemed to threaten his extinction, now reflected back "the brightness of his rising," and appeared

the willing harbingers of his future splendour.

Alas! how true an image of those difficulties, which genius has to encounter, from whose appalling aspect, how often merit but too often sinks beneath the low horizon of its humble fortune; and how often are those talents which might have illumined the world, for ever intercepted by the malignant clouds of envy!

A gentle tap at the door roused Philippa from a brilliant reverie of equipages, dresses, jewels, &c. &c.; and she arose to receive the embrace of Lady Anne de Burgh, who was to officiate as one of her bridemaids.

The dignified yet affectionate Lady Anne addressed Philippa on the important change, that was about to occur, in a manner at once tender and impressive: Miss Egerton wept, for she began to think there must be something really important in that, which every one appeared to consider important;—she wept, for all the heroines of whom she had read, had done the same on similar occasions;—she

wept, for she knew that a gentle tear trembling in her bright eye, and rolling down her transparent cheek, heightened the bloom of the one, and increased the lustre of the other.

Lady Anne's magic touch had given the delicate finish of tenderness to the beautiful face of Philippa;—the entrance and conversation of mingled gaiety, wit, tenderness, and enthusiasm of Miss Argyle, added the grace of animation without dispelling the effect, produced by Lady Anne; and the immovable gravity of Miss Wodehouse, the third bridemaid, threw over the whole a soberness admirably adapted to the occasion.

Philippa descended from her dressing room;—the trembling of her heart chased the blood from her cheek as she thought on the approaching ceremony; or impelled it with renovated brilliancy to its usual seat, as, with bounding exultation, she beheld in the glance of a moment, the brilliant perspective, which the completion of it would open to her view.

At the altar waiting to receive the bridal group, stood the Right Reverend the Lord-Bishop of ———, the kinsman and nominal guardian of Philippa. The solemnity of his aspect, the sacredness of his function, the imposing vest which is peculiar to the dignitary of the church, severally conspired to increase the agitation of Miss Egerton, as *con cor tremante, e con tremante piéde,* she approached the altar.

As the awful ceremony proceeded, pronounced by the impressive voice of the Bishop, even the colour of Sir Thomas Clervaux's cheek fluctuated. His trepidation was observed by the bridemaids, and the peculiar smile that played on the usually immovable features of Miss Wodehouse in the very moment that his eye rested on her, tended not to tranquillize him; —he unfortunately kneeled too near the edge of the hassock, and was shrewdly suspected to have suffered— what he would have considered irreparable in his horse — a pair of broken knees.

The accident was of importance only as it attracted the attention of an observer, who had hitherto leaned against the base of a monument, with folded arms, eye depressed, and cheek of thought, unmindful of the cause that had brought him there, unconscious of the presence of any; perhaps even,— so intensely was his mind occupied in the contemplation of what was not, — of his own existence.

In his rambles through the country, Lord Montague had accidentally become acquainted with Sir Thomas Clervaux. Sir Thomas was a keen sportsman; — the gun of Lord Montague echoed, at intervals, from the rising of each day's sun, to its setting; he pursued the diversion with intenseness, with uninterrupted avidity, with unwearied eagerness; — no friends solicited his attention to other avocations, for where was the man whom Montague called "FRIEND?" — no endearing ties of relationship lured him to perform the kindly offices of affection; —

parents, brothers, kindsmen, all, all were gone; — Lord Montague stood alone.

But though engaging in his present pursuit with apparently unquenchable ardour, with an eagerness which outstripped that of others who possessed a decided preference for the amusement, *he* did *not* prefer it; — it was fascination, infatuation; — the occupation of a man, who was reckless how he disposed of himself. — It was pursued, that he might employ the luxury of thought, whilst the mind's energy was increased by the body's vigour.

Lord Montague had read much, but seen and thought more; — at this period, his very manner indicated a conviction of this world's vanity, as perfect as that of the son of David, and probably deduced from similar premises. He had seen, he considered, every variety that man could see; — he had felt, what few can feel; — he had gained that extensive and uncommonly accurate knowledge of the world, which all wish to acquire, and

which *can* be acquired only at a vast expence; — he knew that time itself is not more fleeting than the attachments that are formed, the transactions that take place, and the feelings that arise during its progress. This conviction had not given any melancholy character to his manners; — whether his cheerfulness arose from content, or from a deadness of feeling which had frozen his heart's affections, so that, by being unoccupied with the varieties of internal agitation usual to man, he possessed greater influence over the external aspect he chose to wear, — was a distinction which none thought it necessary to make; — he *was* cheerful, — animated, — and, what was even a more certain passport to the friendship of Sir Thomas Clervaux, he was a keen sportsman.

Sir Thomas set a high value on the title of "a good shot;" perhaps, because he was conscious how little pretensions he himself had to so contemptible a distinction. *His* gun was superior to all

others; and when, by chance, he did bring down any game, it was presented to him under circumstances of peculiar difficulty; of course, his dexterity was enhanced in proportion. To enforce this conviction, he inflicted on any one who would listen, as much detail concerning the death of each bird, as if a coroner's inquest had sat upon the body. There is, doubtless, "a pleasure in being mad which none but madmen know;" — one blood-thirsty hero may certainly receive high gratification from the recital of another's exploits, though all have the same termination, —

"Then paused the dogs — then pealed th' unerring gun,
"The fowl pitched headlong like the Cretan's son!"

Though Lord Montague had seen so much of men and manners, that he had adopted the position, "there is nothing new under the sun;" — though he no longer *sought* opportunities of observing, he did not reject them when they obtruded

themselves on him. The operation of this feeling led him to accept the introduction to Miss Egerton, that was negociated by Sir Thomas. She was a trifler, but Lord Montague knew her sex, — and, therefore, wondered not; — the beings, whom the impending event had drawn around her, were distinct from herself and from each other; — in Lady Anne de Burgh, he saw a haughty woman of quality, who condescended to throw over that haughtiness the veil of courtesy; — in Miss Argyle, a being changeable as the aspect of the clouds, waved by the wind; — in Miss Wodehouse, a female, who prided herself on possessing a great share of common-sense, devoid of a single particle of sentiment or sensibility. — But in the Bishop of ———, even Lord Montague discovered something he had not generally seen in the vast range of character, that had crossed him in his previous life.

The possibility of discovering in his bosom a spring of interest, which circum-

stance had not exhausted; — the desire of becoming acquainted with a character, whose organization he had not entirely penetrated, and whose mechanism his consummate powers could not affect, to move it, the puppet of his will; — were, if Lord Montague *had* an object in life, the very end of his existence. To feel, that the predominating influence he had generally exercised over every class of men, — equally over societies and individuals, — was also a quality belonging to another, acquired, apparently, by means the most dissimilar, — was novel at least; — Lord Montague became almost interested, but not astonished; — for he possessed, in a degree fatal to happiness, that which is said to be the peculiar attribute of great minds, — he wondered at nothing.

There is a kind of magnetic attraction existing between minds of this species. There is no need of that developement of character, which circumstance affords, to make them comprehend the existence

of a tie, that binds them to each other. The Bishop of —— had arrived at the mansion of Mr. Walworth, the acting guardian of Miss Egerton, only on the morning of the day, previous to *her* union;—it was the first time he and Lord Montague had crossed each other in their path through life;—yet every moment the former could spare from his ward, was devoted to that scrutiny of the latter, which for a moment doubts,—but the more firmly to believe,—the existence of kindred energies.

That the Bishop could entirely comprehend the character of Lord Montague, was impossible;—for circumstances had given so peculiar a hue to the native loftiness of his mind, that, though its grandeur was felt and allowed, the tone of it could be gathered only from a knowledge of those events, that had acted upon it. The course of his excursions during his long intervals of absence from the land which he claimed as his birth-place, was unknown,—and could

be guessed at only by accidental remarks on the customs of other nations, or on the aspect of countries through which he had wandered.

Many more winters had glided over the Bishop than over Lord Montague: the former, from his *very* function, had penetrated the depth of priestly craft and courtly dissimulation; had detected Jesuitical windings, and Machiavelian intricacies: he had witnessed the death-bed of the courtier, whose tongue could scarcely even then lose the tone of adulation; of the demagogue, whose factious spirit aimed at destroying all order, that himself might be the first principle to give animation to the chaos of his own creation:—he had shared—at one time had almost engrossed—the favour of his monarch:—he knew the private inquietudes and public privileges, that attended his exalted station; he had compared them accurately, and had, by *farther* comparison, developed the springs that moved the mind of royalty.

itself: men of all gradations had fallen under his scrutinizing observation; the monarch, the peer, the gentleman, the merchant, the mechanic, the peasant;—he had seen them in those situations when every word bears the stamp of sincerity, because dissimulation can be of no further avail; when the motives of actions are displayed, which even penetration could not exactly discover, though it might assign to them a cause not very dissimilar to the actual one; in those situations, to which malady had reduced them, when the minister of religion perceives the near approach of death, by the more fervent prayer, the more contrite self-accusation, of the sufferer; and from which, all other ranks of men are excluded.

Lord Montague had contemplated man, in his prosperous state,—man, sunk in the depths of adversity—man, buoyant in youth and elasticity of spirits, contemplating the future with ecstacy of hope, the past without pain,—man, bowed by

the weight of years, haply shrinking from retrospection and anticipation; sinking under the burden of infirmity of body, and guiltiness of heart; conscious, that the transition from life to death would be to him only increase of torment; susceptible of but one ardent wish,—that the present, painful as it was, might continue through eternity:—man, an elder indeed, who loved to speak of that of which time had swept away all traces but the remembrance; and who gloried in the brilliant prospect of the everlasting happiness prepared for him. *Man*, in these gradations, in those minute transitions, that soften the boundary between one class and another,—Lord Montague had accurately observed: he saw, that in proportion as man departs from nature and approaches to art, he loses his happiness; that in departing from nature, the impress of divinity is weakened; that it is for education to *improve* the dictates of nature, but not to *change* them; that

virtue, founded on the basis of feelings and principles implanted by nature, is the purest and the least likely to be overthrown.

In short, he saw that the existence and observance of *laws* was necessary to the well-being of man in his social, and, consequently, to the happiness of man in his individual capacity; but that this necessity was occasioned by the departure from natural feelings in our first parents, who violated a natural principle, when they disobeyed the commands of their Creator; and, in fact, that this swerving from natural morality brought "death into the world, and all our woe."

But the Bishop, though he agreed to the particular truth of this theory, knew, that man, having become corrupt, his very nature loses its noble propensities, and acquires, in the place of them, inclinations which, if indulged, would condemn the whole race of man through eternity: — that the religion of the Bible, understood and acted upon, can alone

supply the place of that purity of natural principle and feeling, with which man was primarily created. In short, Lord Montague regarded man as an intellectual being; — the Bishop regarded him as a spiritual one.

This view of himself and his fellow-creatures, far from englooming the mind of the latter, rendered him more cheerful. His presence imposed no restraint on the gaiety of innocence; and if levity became serious before him, it was rather by his courteous exhibition of its opposite quality, than by any studied admonition, or painful remonstrance. Benevolently good, rather than austerely great, — pitying, whilst he condemned, weaknesses, *he* had never *himself* known, — the man was beloved, as much as the ecclesiastic was respected.

The bridal party quitted the seat of Mr. Walworth for a short period, some days after the union of Sir Thomas Clervaux and Miss Egerton. The Bishop and Lord Montague had accepted an

invitation to remain there, each attracted by a desire of enjoying the conversation of the other; for the acquaintance that had commenced between them on the arrival of the former, had gradually expanded into a more intimate association.

CHAP. II.

" Go, search among your idle dreams,
" Your busy or your vain extremes,
" And find a life of equal bliss;
" Or own the next begun in this."

PARNELL.

MR. Walworth retiring one day after dinner with his maiden sister, Mrs. Penelope Walworth, who presided over the domestic economy of his establishment, left the Bishop and Lord Montague *tête-à-tête*. Their conversation turned on WOMAN.

" Custom," said the Bishop, " is a fetter, which none but the strongest minds have resolution to break. Woman, from the very nature of the situation she holds in society, and in the estimation of man, is more confined by it than we are. She cannot transgress its slightest punctilios, or infringe its most absurd

laws, without incurring the charge of eccentricity, at least of volatility — perhaps even, of imprudence. In this instance, where she most needs superiority of mental strength, because she has more difficulties to combat than man, she falls far short of him. A mere custom, bearing the stamp of antiquity, that sterling mark of value to little minds, assumes in the view of such minds the force of a law; these constitute the great mass of mankind, and a highly gifted female fears to oppose the impetuous torrent with her single force, conscious that even those men who most accurately estimate the impotency of the mind, that suffers itself to be fettered by regulations, which its judgment must reject, will not support a *woman* who dares reject them. There *is*, indeed, a female so highly elevated by her mental endowments above the generality, so capable of accurately estimating her mental energies, her own powers of action and decision, that she disdains to

submit to the opinion of those, above whose contracted minds her own energetic one towers consciously superior. The enjoyment of superior abilities, and the possession of the talent to estimate them accurately, are distinct from each other; but the whole force of both is concentrated in her. I am speaking of Miss Argyle, Lord Montague."

"She possesses, I observe, such power of changing her mental appearance, as Proteus of changing his personal one. Perhaps, this variety renders her interesting rather than otherwise. The beholder of human nature trembles at her dangerous inconsistency, and this fear tends not a little to increase his solicitude for her. If," continued Lord Montague, "*if* I were called upon to point out a fault, I should say, that the gaiety of her disposition approached to levity."

"I delight," replied the Bishop warmly, "in that buoyant elasticity of spirits—that exhilarating effect of luxuriant health and energetic youth, which

throws a portion of its radiance on all within the sphere o its action. The expanding prospect of life appears to her like the promised land to the patriarch of old; its fruitful corn-fields, fertilizing streams, and blooming vineyards, strike the eye as objects to be ever gazed on; and the mountains that detract from the smoothness of the traveller's path, add to the beauty of the prospect. Her mind, formed in virtuous seclusion, into which have been carefully infused the principles of moral rectitude, and of a pure, unvitiated religion, boasting as much strength as beauty;—as much to attract the judgment as to allure the fancy and to please the eye;—possesses a shield impenetrable to the shafts of fortune. Her elevated rank in society exempts her from the chance of partaking of many of the miseries of life; and she has too much sense to anticipate those misfortunes, which *must* checquer her path through it.

"I have ever been of opinion, that

marriage ought to proceed rather from a dread the parties feel of being separated, than from a speculative wish to increase the happiness they separately enjoy. It is the fervent wish of my heart to see Miss Argyle united to my nephew: the most my conscience would permit me to do in such a case, would be to introduce them to each other. Each of them has to occupy a responsible situation in life. He, who hazards his whole happiness on the cast of a die, has alone the right of throwing it; by-standers ought not to influence the manner in which he *chooses* to throw it, though their advice may prevent his making a desperate cast.

" Almost commensurate with the satisfaction I should enjoy in the accomplishment of this desideratum of my wishes, would be the pleasure I should derive from seeing your lordship leading worth and beauty to the altar; from beholding 'those olive-branches' rising in proud succession, that might carry your name, your title, and your ho-

nours, to another age; — from seeing you contemplate in your declining years, the thriving scions of future greatness; satisfied with the prospect of quitting this world, because certain that you leave in it models whom your example your instruction, have rendered worthy of yourself; to whom you can entrust your name, your rank, your place in the literary world; because confident that that name, by being consigned to them, will become more splendid — that rank more elevated — that literary eminence equally ascertained. —

" O mihi, tam longæ maneat pars ultima vitæ,
" Spiritus et, quantum sat erit tua dicere facta!
" Non me carminibus vincet nec Thracius Orpheus,
" Nec Linus. ——"

" I am sure," replied Lord Montague, " that your lordship will give me credit for being inexpressibly obliged by the generous interest, a wish so expressed, implies. I have thought long and deeply on this subject. I am perfectly aware that the feelings you describe, are, in

their nature, high and dignified; yet I am of opinion that this species of happiness depends entirely upon peculiar ideas and associations, which I do not possess. There is, indeed, a feeling of unrestrained liberty, an inexpressible charm, a bounding '*gaieté du cœur*,' inducing the 'pulse's maddening play' of ecstatic enjoyment, that accompanies the wandering life I lead, which I could not willingly relinquish for all the sober, tame realities of married life. I am enthusiastically fond of seeing the world; —the speculative amusement it affords is infinite, and incalculable by those who have not enjoyed it. I see this world employed in one great game, and having no material stake upon it myself, I observe its force and pressure with more accuracy. Your lordship will remember what Pythagoras said to Hiero of the Olympic games, '*that he was content to relinquish every chance of advantage for the pleasure of looking on.*'

"*Now*, indeed, habit has strengthened natural inclination. And why, when I am tolerably happy," pursued Lord Montague, "why should I seek to increase enjoyment by a hazardous experiment? Or rather, by exposing to unnecessary risk that portion I do possess, and which alone I am, from peculiar feelings and peculiar circumstances, capable of enjoying, should I not court defeat, and deserve disappointment?

"I would not, for a moment, be understood to insinuate, that the most exalted happiness is not frequently to be found in married life:—your lordship will, nevertheless, I am convinced, at once admit, that in the matrimonial lottery, the blanks preponderate most woefully. Continual proof of the truth of this assertion is submitted to our observation; we daily see men rendered miserable by the capricious folly of those triflers, whom they have selected for their own particular annoyance:—they were doubtless deceived in their choice;

they intended to increase their felicity by sharing it with another!"

"I am certain," replied the Bishop, "that your lordship will acquit me of any impertinent wish to dive into the actual cause, that has prompted these feelings, or to develope the intricacies of those combinations of which they are the result, when I remark, that they seldom arise in the human mind, without some powerful excitement. Sometimes they are generated by disappointed ambition, sometimes by violated friendship, sometimes by unrequited love:—perhaps it more frequently happens, that the person whose heart is their dominion, pictured to himself, in early life, some fairy vision of ideal existence, and the search of after years presenting no equivalent reality, he abandons a pursuit which to the ardent feelings of youth and inexperience once appeared so reasonable, whilst the enthusiasm, that occasioned the disappointment fades, and hopeless apathy rises from its ashes.

"Whether to one of these, or to some other cause, your lordship's present view of things owes its origin, I am neither going to inquire nor to conjecture. I am pleased with the manly candour, that disdains to disavow the sentiments it does not hesitate to entertain; and I am likewise capable of appreciating the liberality and fairness with which you treat the subject of our discussion. The range of possibility does not afford a higher theme on which the mind of man can expatiate, than that of a means of happiness on earth consistent with the will of his Creator. Marriage, whether considered with regard to its origin or consequences, to its influence on man's individual happiness, or to the security it affords to society by strengthening, and rendering more compact, the links that unite it, is an awful subject. I will say *nothing* of the idle and hackneyed jests with which it fills the mouths of the multitude, too contemptible for answer, too futile for refutation: neither would

I, on the other hand, invest it with a gloom which, I am persuaded, was never intended by its divine Author.

"As a practical subject, it has employed many anxious hours of my existence. I have examined the question seriously, and the result of my researches was a perfect conviction of the superior felicity I should enjoy in wedded life. Lord Montague, I married; and every day, by bringing with it an increase of happiness, as far as regarded that relation, proved to me, that however the glowing images of fancy and enthusiasm may precipitate man into error and misfortune, the sober deductions of reason never can.

"If, then, there are any solid enjoyments to be derived from it, your lordship will acquit me of interest or flattery, when I tell you, that I wish you to be a partaker of them.

"In the argument on this subject, that occurred between the two gentlemen who were here yesterday, you recollect,

neither of us joined; perhaps, because we considered their observations trivial, and their positions absurd: yet, if I do not err, you listened to their conversation with as much attention as myself. I remember the smile of derision that curled your lips, when one of the parties, asserting the pleasures of celibacy, adduced as a convincing proof, that Saint Paul had enjoined it. I can very well imagine, that the same reflection was suggested to your mind, as occurred to my own; — I mean, that the Apostle did, indeed, prescribe it to the Corinthian converts, under the peculiar circumstances of difficulty and danger from which they were, at that time, suffering: but that to reduce this injunction, given at a particular period, and in a situation of exigence, to a general axiom, would be as absurd, as if a general of the present day were to plead in apology for a defeat occasioned by imprudence or want of skill, 'that he had used the

same tactics as were successful at Marathon!'"

"From early life," replied Lord Montague, "I have been enamoured of solitude. The gaiety of courts, the enjoyment of literature, the voice of friendship, were, even in the very heyday of existence, often in vain exerted to lure me from my solitary habits."

There was, at times, a peculiar cadence in Lord Montague's voice, perceptible frequently to the most unconcerned auditor. The Bishop, accustomed to gather the character of mankind as much from their various inflections of tone in avowing their sentiments, as from the sentiments themselves, was convinced by it, that there existed in Lord Montague's heart a remembrance of occurrences, the impress of which was deep and indelible; which had, in fact, contributed to produce feelings so different from those of man in general, and had rendered him unconscious of that rapid transition of sensations, that so delightfully affects others.

"By being accustomed," he continued, "to pass many hours of each day alone, I imagine I have, in a great measure, lost that fondness for society, which I observe in men of more domestic habits. That continual intercourse with each other which they value so highly, would to me often appear tedious and intrusive. That sudden change of scene which *now* constitutes so great a portion of my happiness, and — why should I hesitate to avow the fact? — which is the only species of happiness aught on earth can afford me, would, if I were to marry, be impeded or destroyed. Your lordship knows, that an army of observation should not be incumbered with a profusion either of baggage or of artillery."

"To perfect your metaphor," said the Bishop, smiling, "we are to consider this army composed of your lordship's feelings, yourself acting as their commander-in-chief. It would afford me much higher satisfaction to view them as peaceful subjects subordinate to a law-

ful sovereign, whose wise regulations diffused throughout his realm the blessings of order and good government.

"Speculation and amusement will vanish on a death-bed. As food for wit and satire, the subject before us has been exhausted, and, like a vapid fluid, however shaken, will scarcely produce a bead upon the surface. Viewed in *this* light, it no longer interests or amuses ;— it remains for us then to consider it with regard to those sober conclusions it will afford to a wise and virtuous man, after a deliberate and dispassionate consideration of it.

"Experience is always the best evidence that can be afforded on any subject. I am capable of bearing witness to the precise degree of happiness to be found in either state. Some twenty years since, my lord, I was in your situation, with feelings similar in a degree, and with intentions of celibacy exactly corresponding with your own ; — I had, it is true, been educated for the Church ; but I was

more ambitious to *study* man, than to *instruct* him. The death of my father threw into my hands, while *very* young, and *more* inexperienced, the reins of fortune; I bounded into the car, and rushed into the world with the impetuosity of a Phaeton. Like yours, my greatest happiness consisted in the pure liberty of my movements; unfettered by ties of relationship, unincumbered by guardians, as I passed quickly from one scene to another, so exquisite was the sensation this conviction of perfect *uncontrol* imparted to me, that I have felt myself upborne by some guardian spirit, whilst the earth rolled from beneath my feet. This was that ferment of the feelings which produces ecstacy and frenzied enjoyment; but it must subside with the novelty that induces it; — happiness results from internal satisfaction; and the tumultuous agony of joy that struggled in my bosom, was the result only of the conviction, that such internal satisfaction was within my grasp.

" I was sought — I was caressed — by the great and the gay; my society was courted by young men of the highest rank, who were pleased with the contrast my *enjouissance* and susceptibility of pleasure afforded to their own listlessness and inanity; matrons, who numbered in their domestic establishment many daughters or unprovided nieces, — young ladies, who had too many blooming sisters to hope to make a figure in the world whilst they continued single, — spread out lures for me. On my first entrance into the world, though hurried away by the impetus of pleasure, I was an observer; — I was a silent, and neither an unamused nor an uninstructed spectator of the various manœuvres, whose particular sphere of action was the immediate circle into which I was initiated; — of many of which I was the object; — but by which, as I comprehended the exact system of their arrangement, I was in no danger of being injured. The instruction I gathered from them, indeed remained;

but the amusement soon vanished ; — one person of fashion is but the prototype of another ; and this sameness, when once discovered, gave a vapidness to the whole mode of life, with which a man, of my *then* ardent feelings, was soon disgusted.

" With my state of celibacy I was yet highly delighted. How often have I congratulated a recently-married acquaintance with a flash of wit on his dereliction from the good cause, or laughed at him as planet-struck ! If the witling who was the original coiner of these brilliant flashes were still in existence, he would enjoy the satisfaction of seeing his *morceaux* as regularly dished up on these occasions, as turtle at a Lord Mayor's feast !

" Tired with the vapidness of the beings and the scenes that surrounded me, I withdrew myself from the society into which I had been incorporated ; and to indulge my spirit of observation, I attached myself successively to almost every gradation of rank. I proved thus the accuracy of the remark, that ' the charac-

ter of the British nation resembles a cask of their own malt-liquor; — froth at the top, dregs at the bottom; but the intervening portion excellent.' By indulging these habits of observation, I became more confirmed in them; — I was fast exchanging the volatility of youth, for that decisive tone of character which they naturally induced; and perceiving the advantage I had gained, I resolved to prosecute those observations on an extended scale.

" I visited other countries; — I studied the character of men affected by other policies; — I collected from man himself that truism, which is constantly asserted in books — that all are employed in the pursuit of happiness. I saw, that there is but one way by which it can be gained; that the possession is so seldom acquired, because they who toil after it, do not understand the nature of what they wish to attain; — real happiness is an immutable good, and therefore cannot depend on *idea*, because the ideas of *individuals*

differ widely, and those of *nations* are often as diametrically opposite as the cardinal points: — indeed, if I may illustrate this moral truth by an allusion to the various opinions by which the standard of beauty is regulated amongst the different nations who people the globe, I would say, that the English petit-maître who expends an immense quantity of dentifrice in improving the whiteness of his teeth, differs not so much from the Sumatran chief, who, by every means in his power, heightens the jetty hue of his, and incases them in gold, as men differ from each other in their ideas of what constitutes happiness.

"This period of my life passed as yours, my lord, has, hitherto, done, in observation; and the recollection of it neither conjures up one painful thought, nor a wish that it had never been.

"Do not infer, that because I remained single, I was insensible to the power of female charms; — every man of education and of heart *must* feel them. Young, gay,

and susceptible, I saw in every splendid party objects of attraction; the companion of an evening's amusement often appeared again in my slumbers, arrayed in all the panoply of beauty;—lovely as the Houri, in whose smiles the faithful Mussulmans hope to bask through eternity! The rapid succession of these feelings—and it was rather the lapse of a delightful vision, than the reality of actual existence—this general admiration of the sex—preserved me from individual attachment.

"But soon my fondness for travelling was satiated by indulgence. I was yet conscious that much of man remained to be seen—to be studied: that I had still to read much of my own heart, before I could be said to have advanced far in the knowledge prescribed by the Delphic oracle. I looked into myself assiduously;—I checked with vigilance the growth of those weeds of which my own heart seemed to be the native soil; and I resolutely opposed the entrance of those

vices, which the contagion of promiscuous society would otherwise have infused into it. This sort of feeling — so different, as I perceived, from that of the gay and the dissolute by whom I was surrounded — awakened in me the conviction that the clerical function was well adapted for me; and I turned again to those views, which, before the death of my father, had bounded my prospects in life.

"Such was the state of my mind when I first met Adelaide St. Ormond.

"There was nothing romantic, nothing uncommon in the style of my introduction to her; I considered it, at the time, as one of he 'straw-like trifles on life's common stream:' she was beautiful, it is true, and highly accomplished; — but every day presented to me objects possessing the same attractions, and I saw nothing in her distinct from the generality of well-born and well-educated females. Accident — the casual intercourse of society — improved our acquaintance; from seeing and under-

standing something of her mind, I felt interested to see and understand more. By the gratification of this desire, I perceived how widely she differed from the accomplished triflers by whom she was surrounded; — yet even when I had ascertained this, I could have seen her wedded to a man who, I thought, deserved her, without heaving one sigh of regret or disappointment.

" The pleasure, I at first experienced in her society, increased at every interview; she always conversed with me with freedom; with an easy dignity, totally distinct from a mind capable of artifice. We were amused, interested, happy, in the society of each other, and yet absence was arrayed in no material terrors for either.

" But this pleasure — this interest — assumed, at length, so great a power in my heart, that separation from her was misery — the possibility of her preferring another, despair. The pleasures I had formerly sought with so much avidity,

were deprived of the power of giving enjoyment; Adelaide's idea followed me every where, her image began insensibly to steal into every prospect of future happiness; — I felt that to be unhappy with her was impossible, as my preference of her was founded on a conviction of her superior powers of conferring felicity, and of the goodness, the amiability, of her heart.

"I now felt myself justified as a man who knew the world, and as a Christian who had calculated with tolerable accuracy what portion of happiness could be acquired in it, to ask her to become the partner of my future life. I did not, it is true, anticipate a refusal; but if that had occurred, it would have led me to no extravagant resolutions; I should, indeed, have regretted with tears of anguish the loss of a being, who was so dear to me; but to have seen her happy would have rendered me tranquil: — I should still have enjoyed a secret satis-

faction in being, if possible, the guardian genius of her future life.

"But, happily, I was not reduced to this alternative; I received at once unqualified acceptance from a heart that was above disguise. The period that immediately succeeded the formation of our engagement, was indeed delicious; and the visible increase it occasioned to Adelaide's happiness, sublimed it to a pitch of rapture. The spring of existence seemed to have become more powerful. I saw in the treasure of my heart that being over whose life I was to watch with anxious solicitude; we were to be associated in all its pleasures and its pains; to repose in the same grave, and to stand together at the bar of immortality. This contemplation formed the summit of felicity; it had all the glowing delight of a splendid vision, with all the sober certainty of reality.

"We were united, and saw together the most interesting parts of Europe. Travel unfolded all the native energies

of a vigorous and highly cultivated mind; and, at the expiration of two years, on our return to our native soil, I had the satisfaction of seeing her admired by all, equalled by few, surpassed by none.

"Picture to yourself, my lord, my establishment conducted by such a woman — my general life spent with her. How superior to any '*gaieté du cœur*' that can be found in a lonely mansion or a bustling inn! Who would for a moment place the bought attentions of dependants in competition with the affectionate solicitude of a wife? Look at the aggregate of human life, — observe the chamber of sickness and the bed of death; it is there we learn to estimate the real value of things — the comparative comfort of condition; it is there we see every thing stripped of disguise; it is there we discover what portion of sterling gold may fall to the lot of a reasonable man, and how he can most easily divest it of its dross; it is there,

in short, we discover that man is a creature whose happiness depends, in a great measure, on the sympathy, the affection, the good-will of others; and that he who lives alone, becomes self-engrossed and misanthropic.

"I am well aware, that the man who enters society in search of a wife, very soon finds one, who perhaps does not recompense even the slight degree of anxiety the securing of her occasioned. But I may add, that he who endeavours by every means in his power to fortify his mind against being *tempted*, as he would call it, to marry, is employed in rendering callous the most dignified feelings of his nature."

"I acknowledge," replied Lord Montague, "that the picture of connubial felicity which your lordship has drawn, is, indeed, delightful: yet I am well aware that your happiness must be attributed to that peculiar good fortune that attended your choice. I mean to say, that how fair soever may be the prospects

which marriage promises, there is a dreadful uncertainty of those prospects ever being realized."

"I imagine," returned the Bishop, "that this remark of your lordship is equally applicable to every species of human felicity. I am convinced, that marriage, formed with proper views, and a rational estimation of what the state can give, is as little liable to fail of bestowing happiness, as any other human pursuit. I know, indeed, that the education and habits of the present day are not very favourable to that developement of character, which enables a man to form an accurate judgment of the heart and life. A few formal interviews are but too often the only prelude to a connection, which death alone can dissolve. After leading the companion of a ball-room, or the partner of a card-table, to the altar, the deluded husband is astonished to find, that those qualities which had excited his admiration, were elicited by peculiarly adventitious circumstances, exhi-

bited on particular occasions, and possessing little or no influence on the general character of his associate. Nothing is, in *this* case, chargeable to deceit; for it would be as reasonable to expect the light and heat of noon-day sun-shine to continue through the night, as to anticipate the same serenity under every variety of circumstance, and the action of different events to which life is subject. The judgment was never exercised in appreciating those qualities of the mind, which are calculated to support life with dignity, and in the bitterness of a too late conviction, every deficiency is attributed to studied deception."

"Your remarks, my lord," replied Lord Montague, "must speak forcibly to a man whose own experience verifies them. A few years since, I was particularly interested with the present Countess of ——; but after a careful investigation of her character and motives, I found she was far more influenced by a coronet, than by any personal affection for me

To use the expression of a nautical friend, she had entered life with the broom at the mast-head, — a signal hoisted by vessels to denote their being on sale to the best bidder. I found myself more immediately the choice of her friends than of herself; and though the world was pleased to consider me in the light of a disappointed rival, I assure your lordship, I saw her become the wife of the present Earl of ——, without any very poignant feelings of regret.

"The sister of that very Countess, she whose name is now known not over England only, but even throughout Europe, was once also an object of powerful interest to me. Shall I say, that it was the lady herself who sought to excite that interest by the tenderest attentions? — it was founded on *gratitude;* it was a forcible sentiment, it might have become immutable; but I had not lost my powers of observation: I discovered, that I was but one of the many, whom she by turn so distin-

guished: I was not likely to set a high value on that affection, which, like the finger of a dial, could be directed to any figure in its circle, and had occasionally pointed towards each. So light a prize would never tempt me into the lists.

"I am conscious, my lord, that a degree of singularity, perhaps of romance, tinges my feelings on this important subject. I could not ally myself to a woman merely because, from a slight acquaintance, I discovered no material obstacle to my being *comfortable* with her. Oh no! cold *comfort* is not for me! in *such* a state I must enjoy the ecstacy of happiness, or combat the very agony of misery.

"Call me romantic, call me a visionary, a dreamer; let my feelings *be* a romance, a vision, a dream, all, to which the world affords no corresponding reality: bid me tame my heart's wild pulsation to the calm motion of life's souls of common clay,—oh, I would woo my sleep again, and tell you such a dream were worth a patriarch's age of life!

If before the altar of the eternal God I am to bind my own immortal soul to the equally indissoluble essence of another, it shall be with that one,—and in the vast range of nature not more than *one* such being can exist,—with that one on whom I could pour the whole energies of my heart — of that heart, whose impassioned pulse wakes but at the bidding of enthusiasm. If I am not to live singly, I will unite myself to her, whose ardent heart shall vibrate to every throb of my own, whose society will form the chief blessing of my existence on earth; separation from whom would be the most agonising bitterness of death, and the prospect of our reunion hereafter, the brightest vision of eternity!

"Should it please Heaven to bless me with the knowledge of an Adelaide — of such a being as her who possessed energy to move the springs of a mind like your lordship's,—I would sacrifice, with transport, every earthly distinction, every

advantage or enjoyment, to obtain the blessing.

"With *such* feelings, have I not a claim to anticipate a corresponding enthusiasm on the part of my associate? Oh! what could *I* expect but misery, in uniting myself to a heartless being, the regular, apathetic tranquillity of whose character was agitated only by her interest, and the undeviating calmness of whose pulse would suffer neither increase nor diminution by such an event?

"It is so long since I have dared to speak of myself — it is so long — alas, *when* have I met with a being who excited in me a desire to do so? — that I trust this avowal will obtain your lordship's excuse for the impetuosity which, in my *open* moments, characterises me.

"My heart rather than my reason dictates my wishes and my expectations," continued Lord Montague; "independently of extensive talents and unblemished purity of mind, I should consider the very enthusiasm of personal devotion

indispensable. *Love* seems a poor name to express the ardour, the absorbing energy of that passion, which I must feel, if I throw off this frigid veil of apathy in which I have shrouded the fire of feeling that still lurks beneath: ah yes! *shrouded* indeed,—its existence *unsuspected*,—but itself *extinguished* never! From the being on whom all this glow of enthusiastic ardour was lavished, I surely might expect *love*, impassioned love, and entire devotedness.

"The content — a cold, cheerless content, certainly, but *yet content* — with which I regard my present situation, proves to you that all-visionary as I may be, I am not so sanguine as to expect, that this delicious dream will ever be realised. Nor will its failure render me miserable: no trivial cause can raise that ferment of feeling in my bosom, which may be called *misery;* I can be well satisfied to remain as I am; a disappointment in marriage alone can completely shadow me; and though after a

period spent in the dull unvarying round of common life, I almost pray to have my heart agitated by *some* novel sensation, be it agony of bliss or woe, yet in my calmer moments, — and, trust me, very few hours of my existence are otherwise than cold and calm, — I am well contented with my present situation.

"I have already seen too much of this uncongenial world, to calculate with hope on the future events of it. Until I actually find myself within the sphere of such a character, I remain tranquil; cheerful in my apathy; contented to be the centre of my own system, repelling rather than attracting those bodies, that would shine in my light, yet exist without receiving my heat. To inspire devoted passion, to become the object of enthusiasm, would open to me a new and delicious world of existence: how willingly would I embark in pursuit of it! how delightedly contemplate it as a reality to be enjoyed, rather than as a vision to be dreamed! But if I adore

without being loved, if I hang in agony or bliss on the accents of one who hears me with indifference, — oh! let me not marry! — such a misfortune may arise from a failure in my judgment; let it never result from a compromise of my heart!"

"Excuse my interrupting the current of your lordship's ideas," said the Bishop; "but, in truth, you are now engaged in combating a phantom, in deprecating a calamity, which, in the probable course of things, will not occur. Your extensive and accurate knowledge of the world, renders the idea of your becoming the prey of the designing, absurd and improbable. You are not the man to be attracted by common qualities, however amiable, or by superficial acquirements, however dazzling. Your happiness, though it may be lost, is not likely to be sacrificed on the altar of experiment. Whilst you estimate so highly the enthusiasm of which you speak, you are not to be reminded, that its action is rather to be

expected after marriage than before; that the habits of society and education in this country, in a great measure, preclude the possibility of its appearance, until a guarantee is given, that it may not become ridiculous.—To ascertain whether the object of your choice *possesses* these feelings, ought to be your care, rather than to wait for an exhibition of them towards yourself. They are generally the result of peculiar situations and peculiar circumstances: the woman who betrays such enthusiasm of fondness for her *lover*, may be justly suspected of wanting that exquisite feeling of delicacy, which is the *husband's* best security."

CHAP. III.

" So Zembla's rocks, the beauteous work of frost,
Rise white in air, and glitter o'er the coast;
Pale suns unfelt at distance roll away;
And on th' impassive ice the lightnings play."

POPE.

" Bold her mien,
And like an haughty huntress of the woods,
She mov'd: yet sure she was a gentle maid!
And in each motion her most innocent soul
Beam'd forth so brightly, that who saw would say,
Guilt was a thing impossible in her!"

COLERIDGE.

THREE weeks had elapsed; the bridal party had returned; and Lord Montague was still the guest of Mr. Walworth;—yet not exactly the same being as had witnessed the union of Sir Thomas Clervaux and Miss Egerton.

He was not exactly the same being, because *then* he had believed " there was nothing new under the sun;" and because he had *now* found an interest,—an occupation in life; he had gained a

FRIEND,—Lord Montague had gained a *friend*, to whom he could communicate the ideas that passed through his mind, and the sentiments that occupied it, without fear of being misunderstood. He had discovered a being who could comprehend and justly estimate his character; who could admire its magnificent qualities, without shrinking from its eccentricity. In short, he no longer stood alone in the world; there was a person, who, without seeking to dive into the past and wring from him those secrets that were buried in his breast, entered into his future prospects with all the anxiety of the purest, the most disinterested friendship.

Lord Montague again began to observe and to speculate: this new-formed and principal interest involved some minor interests. The nephew of the Bishop arrived at Mr. Walworth's; Lord Montague felt himself engaged in deep study of his and of Miss Argyle's character, before he was aware, that

either possessed any claims to originality; and he found an interest in calculating what would be the result of that introduction, from which events most important to both parties were expected to originate.

Lord Montague perceived that the expressions of self-gratulation which Mr. Grosvenor poured forth on meeting his uncle, were sincere, and he valued the young man accordingly; for he could not think meanly of that understanding, which could so justly appreciate the value and the dignity of the Bishop's connection.

In every respect the projected union of Mr. Grosvenor and Miss Argyle appeared highly eligible; he was within three months of five and-twenty, she just nineteen. They both occupied a decided station in society, from which neither would descend by the connection; in short, no two beings could be more suitable to each other.

Henry Wharton Grosvenor possessed

decidedly great personal pretensions; in fact, he was so handsome a man, that it would have been *an event* to have seen the ladies' eyes directed to any other person when he was present: he had been the admiration of the sex from infancy to boyhood; that admiration had increased with his years; and it reflects no small degree of credit on him, that he was not a coxcomb;—that, if the two characters are indeed distinct, he was not a fool.

Lord Montague observed, that Grosvenor never appeared to less advantage than in the presence of Lady Anne de Burgh; his introductory bow even had been marked by unusual aukwardness; Lady Anne's answering courtesy had been slightly tinctured with haughtiness: Lord Montague's knowledge of the world enabled him to develope character, but could not bestow the power of accounting for circumstances, that appeared to be the effect of something,

that had occurred in a sphere, and at a time, remote from his observation.

"How very disagreeable it is," said Lady Clervaux one day, "that *that* Lord Montague should think of staying here so long! Almost five weeks since he came! and he has annoyed me so ever since! I wish, Sir Thomas, you would tell him to go!"

"Faith, not I, Lady Clervaux!" replied the recently married man, in a tone he would not perhaps have selected in his wooing days; "I wish to G—d women knew when to be contented! It was but yesterday you were wanting black-game; we went out shooting this morning for *your* satisfaction, and Montague brought down the very birds you wanted; yet you wish him gone! An excellent shot he is, upon my life! The devil's been in me lately, or I should not so completely have got my hand out, by running a wild-goose chace in a marrying expedition, — God help me!"

Sir Thomas whistled the first two bars of a march, and walked off.

"How vastly polite!" said Lady Clervaux, with an air of pique; "but," she resumed after a slight pause, her countenance brightening as she uttered the sentence, "it is all very fashionable, and, therefore, must be proper and elegant: I heard the Marquis of Newtown say almost the same to the Marchioness, and they had not been married a week. —I wish though, Lord Montague would go."

"I do not exactly understand why you should, Lady Clervaux; he is dignified without being presuming, and learned without being pedantic. If he does not promote actual frolic, he never breaks the thread of amusing conversation by any caustic remark," said Lady Anne de Burgh.

"I imagine too," added Miss Wodehouse, "that he possesses a great share of common-sense, which is to me a very great recommendation. Yet I confess

his presence, as Lady Clervaux wishes to intimate, imposes a degree of restraint, which no exertion can shake off: when he speaks, every one hangs with the deepest attention on what he utters, as if he were Seneca or Locke revived; every one seems compelled by irresistible impulse to follow his lead. He is an excellent linguist, and has certainly a great share of common-sense!"

Miss Argyle sat apparently intently occupied with playing a bandaloure, and occasionally shaking a tambarine: but when Miss Wodehouse had really concluded her very distinctly pronounced opinion, she repeated, without any apparent connection with the preceding subject, a verse from the Koran;—"Give alms of that which God hath bestowed on you:" for it had not escaped her observation, that Miss Wodehouse, valuing herself on her share of common-sense, never failed to bestow a proper quantity of it on any person, who stood high in her opinion.

"Miss Wodehouse certainly got that idea from Surrey," said Lady Anne in reply to Miss Wodehouse's long sentence.

"Did she?" said Miss Argyle, with a carelessness that defies description; "the injury the gentleman sustained by the theft, was about equivalent to that of the '*naked Pict*' who was robbed of his '*painted vest*' by the grandsire of Prince Vortigern."

Grosvenor laughed; and Miss Wodehouse secretly admired his mouth and teeth as he did so; almost wondered where he got his dentifrice;—*common-sense*, perhaps, and certainly common-sense alone and not disinclination, prevented her asking the name of the manufacturer.

"Your remark is not just in its application," said Lady Anne, addressing Miss Argyle; "Surrey is a reading young man; his father is a reading man; and it is not literature of a light species which they read; it is the poets and philosophers. Yes, I assure you, Surrey is really a *reading* young man."

Lady Anne de Burgh had a high value for her family connections, a great desire that they should be considered important; — an aristocratic pride, that prompted her to seize every means of increasing their consequence; — amongst men of literature, by asserting their claims to be considered such; amongst men of family and fortune, by insisting on their rank and wealth. Their pretensions to the latter were certainly, in general, never so likely to be disputed as their pretensions to the former. This was the weak part of Lady Anne's character — the *only* weak part. It was a great failing, a decided imperfection: but the best of mortals have *some* fault, some folly, some trait of character, to prevent their fellow-creatures mistaking them for angels; and Lady Anne had as much to offer in excuse for hers, if she had thought there needed an excuse, as most people; — example, precept, education, society, had conspired to infuse and to fix them.

Miss Argyle understood exactly the scale of Lady Anne's mind; she appreciated the goodness and the general dignity of it; and she quietly resumed her bandaloure and tambarine, without once endeavouring to prove, that Surrey was not a reading man, or feeling impatient with Lady Anne for asserting that he was.

Grosvenor, who was rapidly losing that embarrassment he had, at first, felt in Lady Anne's presence, was not inclined to allow Surrey's claim to the reputation of a "*reading man*" so easily. "The amusement," said he, "that Surrey derives from the poets and philosophers, reminds me of the indulgence granted to young Dick Dapper by his father. After the august parent had entertained a party with dead bottled porter worse than 'drowsy Mum,' Dick was permitted to derive every possible inspiration from the *heel-taps*."

"Strike me inelegant," said Surrey, who had entered the room during the

latter part of the sentence; "strike me inelegant, if that allusion to bottled porter and drowsy mum is not cursedly vulgar!"

"It was just, nevertheless; was it not just, Miss Ar—— that is Miss Wodehouse?" said Grosvenor, who thought Miss Argyle was more attentive to her bandaloure than Miss Wodehouse to her book, and he changed his address accordingly.

Miss Wodehouse again looked full on Grosvenor, again admired the peculiar curl of his mouth so warmly, that the sentiment would have been expressed on any countenance less immovable than her own. "Common-sense, perhaps," she began, after a pause of due deliberation concerning the question on which she was called to decide; "common-sense, perhaps——"

Grosvenor hemmed, turned away, and joined in the cadence of the last new waltz, which Lady Clervaux, who sat on a sofa with the notes in her hand, was

singing. Miss Wodehouse resumed her perusal of a work, proving the superiority of common-sense to sensibility and learning — nay the utter uselessness and absurdity of the two latter requisites; a work, indeed, which had crowded the booksellers' shelves from the time of its publication to the present period.

"That woman with her vast share of common-sense, and her no wit and no sensibility," said Grosvenor, in a whisper to Miss Argyle, "reminds me more forcibly every day of the description of certain plants, which I have sometimes read in my grandmother's herbal; — "root woody — stem robust — blossom wanting."

"Mr. Grosvenor," said Miss Argyle with an animation totally distinct from the carelessness she had hitherto displayed, "how very eager you are in the pursuit of that which is of no value when attained."

"What does Miss Argyle mean?"

"She means, that Mr. Grosvenor is exerting *tout son possible* to acquire the appellation of *a wit.*"

"I wish you, Miss Argyle, would acknowledge the justice of my claim to it."

Miss Argyle was carefully examining the bells of her tambarine, and did not make the enquiry Mr. Grosvenor had anticipated. "You know," he continued, "it was a maxim of the Sanhedrim, 'that the testimony of one prophet was sufficient to establish the authority of another;' and it is a maxim of my own, that 'the testimony of one wit is sufficient to establish the fame of another.'"

"I am not going to affect a very pretty, and, I dare say, a very becoming ignorance of the inference you expect me to draw from that very fine allusion;" said Miss Argyle, waving her hand over her tambarine at intervals, and turning a very unembarrassed eye on Gros-

venor; "but it is not my way to affect ignorance of what I perfectly understand: compliment, in any shape, even in the original one you give it, can but *ennuyer* me. I have been used to it, and have considered it as a thing of course from my birth: fortunately I have had so much of it, that I am now glad of truth, in however homely a guise it may be clad;" and the action of the bandaloure was again resumed.

Repulse in any shape, more especially a rejection of the compliments he offered, was new to Grosvenor; he was not embarrassed, and he was not displeased by it; but the sensation it produced, was novel and not agreeable; to escape it, he addressed Miss Wodehouse.

"Why do you, Miss Wodehouse, read that work?" he inquired, glancing at the title-page.

"In the first place, because the general idea of it is good; in the next place, because the opinions maintained in it,

have entirely common-sense for their basis; and thirdly, because the author is my friend."

"If your second article of preference be indeed sufficient to stamp the value of a production, *yet* why should you read that? For you must be aware that you could write much better yourself."

"Perhaps so," replied Miss Wodehouse, pleased with such a compliment from Grosvenor; "but it may be, that I shall find the subject placed in precisely that point of view, in which I have not hitherto been accustomed to consider it."

"But I do not apprehend, that your good sense will lead you to seek novelty at the expense of sterling good. We know, that no point of view can possibly be better than that in which the subject is considered by men of profound attainments and tried abilities; and certainly the time you must consume in reading that large and closely-printed volume, might be much better employed in col-

lecting ideas from those authors, whose works abound in them. When men of eminence have considered a subject in all its bearings, we are certain that inferior authors must, like tributary streams, borrow all that is valuable from the parent river; the impurity they contract in their progress, is not to be preferred to the clearness of the fountain-head. — Ha! — your friend Miss Tresham is the author."

"Yes:—you know Miss Tresham:— she has a vast share of common-sense!"

"Know Miss Tresham? — who, in Bath, does *not* know her? — Yes, I *do* know Miss Tresham; and — oh, by the bye, it is some months since you were at Bath — I came from there direct, and I left it,— perhaps, with some regret. *Mon Dieu! que cette ville est charmante — quelquefois!*"

Lady Anne de Burgh spoiled the letter she was writing, by running her pen across it; the colour of her cheek

changed, and she concealed herself more completely from the view of Grosvenor, by changing her seat to avoid the direct rays of the sun.

"Yes, I left Bath and Miss Tresham with regret. The fact is, that lady's celebrity is so great — I am not going to dispute with you, Miss Wodehouse, on the subject of her *meriting* that *éclat* — *hé bien!* — her celebrity is so great, that her friends have a great inclination, if not to divide it, at least to enjoy a portion of it: — *c'est pourquoi* — a young female relation arrives, possessing every recommendation in the world, except beauty, accomplishments, sense, and family, — that is to say, she has money — *c'est une petite bourgeoise qui a beaucoup de bien.* But at Bath, the countenance of this splendid Miss Tresham was very desirable; for the *petite bourgeoise* wanted fashion: and for fashion she strove with all her powers of action: in short, she exhibited a per-

fect caricature of the *Oldenburgh; mon Dieu!*—I think I see now the little Dutch figure!—No waist!—no length of petticoat!—a perfect monster, consisting of head, flounces, and legs! all the finery with which money and bad taste could load her little person, it exhibited! And then—so tenacious of dignity of appearance! I need not describe to you, ladies, how imposing an air of fashion that pretty receptacle of billets-doux, &c. yclept a *ridicule,* has the power of bestowing. One of these appurtenances,—a *chef-d'œuvre* of the kind, was an appendage of the *chère petite.* Now you, Miss Argyle, are so much above the minutiæ of dignity, so regardless whether others admire you or respect you, because, perhaps, you are conscious that respect and admiration are at your command, that you really—yes, during the very short time I have had the honour of your acquaintance—you *really,* in view of a whole town, have thrice

carried a parcel! But *ma petite bourgeoise* began to imagine that it would be more dignified to have a *laquais* at her heels with this aforesaid elegant ridicule; — dear, sweet, ridiculous, little animal, what an infinity of amusement has she afforded me!"

"And you regretted exchanging the amusement this *coquille-de-moule* afforded you, for the society to be found here!" said Lady Anne de Burgh, turning round, and speaking with more haughtiness than the occasion appeared to warrant.

"You wrong me, Lady Anne;" answered Grosvenor, his colour rising, and the forcible tone of his voice speaking the disdain with which he heard the supposition; "I am not going to deny my partiality to the observing of original characters, however absurd they may be; I do not expect to gain that knowledge of mankind of which I am ambitious, without studying every page of the book which contains it. I hope, however, that

my theory and my practice are not so very different, as to permit *me*, who was just now recommending to Miss Wodehouse not to neglect what was valuable for what was merely new, to fall into the same error on a more extended scale. I hope, your ladyship will do me the justice to believe, that when summoned by the Bishop of ——— to attend him, no business would appear to me sufficiently important to sanction the neglect of such a summons."

The indignant glow which had overspread Grosvenor's countenance as he began to speak, had gradually subsided, but had, in a degree, communicated itself to Lady Anne de Burgh's. She resumed her writing: — Grosvenor, perfectly tranquil, addressed some trifling remark to Miss Wodehouse, and then examined Miss Argyle's tambarine.

"By Jove!" said Surrey, "that bandaloure of Miss Argyle's is a devilishly amusing contrivance. I'll tell you a

good story of one ; — when I was at Tom Beaumont's last Christmas — Tom Beaumont's of Beaumont Hall — every body knows Tom Beaumont, and every body knows Beaumont Hall, — that is, every body who is any body. — Beaumont Hall, a vast, fine building : — 'pon my soul, don't remember to have seen any thing like it : — fine old ruins of the ancient castle not a quarter of a mile from the new place — equal to any thing in England — a spot too of such historical interest — built in the year 587 by Ethelfrid, after he had seized on the province of Deira, and united it to Bernicia — *hodie*, county of Northumberland. Afterwards, in 1054, in possession of Siward, father-in-law of that Duncan whom Will Shakspeare has rendered so famous, and who, if historians are to be believed, established Malcolm on the throne of his ancestors; — connected, in short, with every most striking historical fact. Tom Beaumont doesn't value himself so much on it as

some people would; Tom's a devilish good fellow; — keenest sportsman and best hounds in the country. Every body knows Tom Beaumont's hounds — all the country, members of the Beaumont hunt."

"You promised us a good story about a quarter of an hour since," said Miss Argyle, cutting her pencil, "and I have heard nothing like it yet."

"Did I?—oh, faith, so I did. You see, my head runs so on one thing after another, that I am devilishly forgetful of the first subject: it's the case with many people though; there was old Doctor Burdett — the cleverest fellow in England — it was the same with him; — always wandering! — A great reader!"

"And possessed, I believe, a much better knowledge of words than of ideas," said Grosvenor; "more ready change in his pocket than large bills in his cabinet; — the current coin of all nations, which he had heaped together promiscuously,

and consequently he was always in danger of offering foreign pieces in his own country."

"He wanted common sense," said Miss Wodehouse.

"He read so much, that it is not wonderful his memory became confused," said Lady Anne.

"A bad thing when a patient takes more than he can digest," said Grosvenor.

"Aye, there again," said Surrey; "I remember at Newmarket last year, old Harley — Captain Harley, they call him, — about as much right to a military title as I have; it's really quite extraordinary how people get those names! it's a most absurd practice, and ought to be put a stop to. Captain *this*, and Major *that*, and sometimes, even, General *so-and-so*; — and then these confounded militias! — my brother Dick, colonel in the —— regiment of dragoons, tells devilish good stories of the tricks they were used to play the militia *baddouds*. There was a

Lieutenant Morgan—Owen, or some such cursedly vulgar name, boasting that for twenty-four descents his family had always been clergymen. 'Have they so?' says Dick—no, by the bye, if I recollect right, it was'nt Dick—no, no, it was myself;—'Have they so?' says I; 'and that's no great proof why you're to be admitted into the company of gentlemen,' says I. 'Your four-and-twenty Protestant ancestors must have lived a devilish short time each; for, less than three centuries ago, Roman Catholicism was the established religion of the realm: what do you say to that, my boy?' 'Say!' says he, and he looked cursedly foolish; 'Say! why, nothing.'—And nothing he did say; but he flung up his commission;—strike me inelegant if he did not."

"This is all very excellent, very witty, and very credible, Mr. Surrey," said Miss Argyle; "but it has nothing to do with the story you set out with, of

a Mr. Beaumont — a Mr. Tom Beaumont."

"Beaumont? Tom Beaumont? — oh, aye, true; I remember I was telling you what a confounded fool he had made of himself, to build a new, ill-contrived, unclassical house, in the most horrible part of Northumberland; all brick, as modern as a *parvenu:* and, indeed, what is he but a *parvenu?* — a man of to-day; — great stud of horses which he never rides, dogs which he never takes out, rooms which he never uses! — Quite a ——" Surrey stopt suddenly; Lord Montague entered.

Grosvenor arose to give him a seat; Miss Wodehouse closed her book, to be ready to answer any question he might do her the honour to ask; Lady Anne de Burgh laid aside her pen, and drew her chair into its former situation, although the rays of the sun were stronger than before; Surrey stood with his mouth half open; Lady Clervaux co-

loured, and looked on the sofa to tell him there was room for him; and Miss Argyle continued to amuse herself with her tambarine, without any indication of the slightest accession of emotion.

CHAP. IV.

"O daughter of the rose, whose cheeks unite
The differing titles of the red and white;
Who heaven's alternate beauty well display, —
The blush of morning and the milky way;
Whose face is Paradise, but fenced from sin,
For Heaven in either eye hath placed the cherubim."
DRYDEN.

"She was in the dawn of life with all its fragrance around her, and yet so pure, that even the blush which sought to hide her lustre, but disclosed the vestal deity that burned beneath it." PHILLIPS.

TOWARDS the close of a delightful autumnal day, Lord Montague withdrew himself from the society at Mr. Walworth's, to enjoy the luxury of a solitary ramble.

The evening was delicious; the air breathed voluptuously; a thousand beautiful tints diversified the aspect of the heavens; the beams of the setting sun fell on the lake, and gilded the ob-

jects that were shadowed in its bosom; the mellow hue of those trees whose leaves vary with the seasons, was rendered more glowing by the contrast of scattered evergreens; melodious notes issued from the aviary, delightful in every variety of tone; the sound of music with which the party within doors were amusing themselves, streamed on the air, and was rendered sweeter by the distance; the summits of the distant hills of ——shire were red with the deep rays of the sun; every distinct object contributed to beautify and improve the whole.

Lord Montague stood; he leaned against a rustic column; he looked around. "How beautiful! To those inexperienced ones whose hearts care has never scared — disappointed hope has not blighted, how such a scene as this must breathe of happiness!"

He passed his hand over his eyes; the distant strains of the harp broke on his ear more distinctly. He started, — he

moved on. "Father of heaven!" thought he, "how much are we the creatures of imagination! a tone—a touch—a glance, has the power of bringing into our view, in one moment, the recollection of actions which, in their actual accomplishment, occupied years!"

A fountain played at his feet: the form of it; the extent; the beautiful clumps of trees that overhung it; its silvery sound; seemed familiar objects to him. It was resemblance only that rendered its appearance thus familiar; it was distance, time, and absence, that had thus embodied a remote similitude. This fountain, that played in Mr. Walworth's pleasure-grounds, was, for a moment, identified in his view with one he had used to frequent abroad, at Buyukdere. Here he was alone; there, even though midnight had been the scene of his visiting it, he was surrounded by Greeks and Armenians. The radiance of the sun *here* poured its

fulness on the waters; *there* the clear transparency of the moon's light had played on their surface: *now* he was in the neighbourhood of the Irish sea; *then* he had been on the banks of the Bosphorus. The difference was vast; but fancy found a resemblance where reason would in vain have endeavoured to discern one.

Lord Montague drew from his pocket a book, and walked on. He turned over several loose scraps of paper; the characters on them were in modern Greek, and consisted chiefly of short sentences. He read them over several times. Lord Montague alone, and Lord Montague in society, were different beings. He sighed profoundly, refolded the papers, and returned the book to its former place.

He passed on: a light, quick step following close upon him, induced him to look back; it was Miss Argyle. "I have had the good fortune, my lord," she said, "to secure a paper which has just

escaped from your pocket-book. — I have the pleasure of restoring it."

Lord Montague bowed and received it; it was a Romaic sonnet. "During my residence abroad," he said, "I collected several specimens of modern Greek poetry. On the other side of this paper you will find a translation; it was done by a person, who has been long gone; who thought not of its being ever exposed to other eyes than those, for which it was more particularly intended. I am not going to ask your indulgence of its defects: the writer had no claims to, — never aimed at, perfection."

Miss Argyle took the paper: the verses written on it ran thus: —

"Oh heaven and earth, what would I give to feel
That peace, which once this artless bosom knew,
When on my closing eyelids sleep would steal,
Soft, as once fell on Gideon's fleece the dew!
E'en now appear, slow rising to my view,
Those brilliant scenes, that blest life's opening morn;
But widowed Hope repeats her last adieu;
The pageant fades; the soothing scene is gone!

Again I feel abandoned and forlorn;
Life's future ills in dread succession rise;
I bend in tears, and ask, 'must these be borne?
And shall at last some glorious day-spring rise?'—
By heaven, it shall!—and He who cannot lie,
Shall give to those that ask, their native sky."

"I feel an interest," said Lord Montague, receiving the paper, "in looking over these records of my earlier years: the person to whom I was indebted for those lines was, at that time, an intimate acquaintance; he sunk early in the embrace of death; his fate endears him to my memory: when we were living together in Greece, I discovered in him many imperfections; but death has obliterated the remembrance of every thing but his attachment to myself, the dangers we endured together, and the solitary state in which I found myself, when he sunk into the grave. *Living*, Miss Argyle, he was to me a pleasing acquaintance; but *dead*, he appears to me always as a friend, who was, for a long period, associated with myself in every scene. The lines you

have seen, are rather an imitation of the Romaic, than a translation from it."

"Perhaps," said Miss Argyle, "I ought to have told you that I understand Romaic;" and she uttered the sentence without feeling herself obliged to blush for the possession of a knowledge, which was not very valuable, and the acquisition of which had cost her nothing but a small portion of her time. "My father," she continued, "was, at various periods of his life, a good deal in Turkey and the Morea. He was partial to Athens,—perhaps on account of its classic interest,—perhaps on account of its delightful climate; degraded as it is, he was still partial to it; and he taught me the language, because it recalled to his mind certain recollections and associations, which he always remembered with pleasure."

"You understand Romaic!" said Lord Montague, in a tone that spoke satisfaction rather than surprise; for he did not think it incumbent on him to appear

astonished at a circumstance, which had been accounted for in so very natural a manner. "I am like your father, Miss Argyle, in this point; I am partial to Athens, and to the language I was accustomed to speak there. It revives associations, it recals objects, which, though perhaps not always pleasing, are yet capable of bestowing a mournful satisfaction. Fortunately, memory is more tenacious of pleasing events than of painful ones."

"Perhaps you are right," said Miss Argyle; "yet memory rarely gives to past events so deep a colouring as they actually possessed; she is a charming softener of shadows; she blends lights and shades so beautifully, that, like a finely-painted landscape, every rugged feature is imperceptibly lost in the distance: memory acts on events, perhaps, as a veil on the human countenance,—it heightens beauty and conceals deformity."

"It may also, perhaps," returned

Lord Montague, "be compared to a mist, which conceals the clouds in the firmament, but through which the sun-beams continually penetrate."

"If she were *not* such a softener of events," said Miss Argyle, "man would have little reason to be thankful for that quality of his mind: for misfortunes occur to mortals much more frequently than blessings."

"True, most true! As far as close observation and immediate experience can entitle me to speak decisively, I acknowledge the truth of your remark."

"And it is fit it should be so," said Miss Argyle; "or what — what would be the horrors of that death-bed, on which man was to relinquish equal and certain happiness, for that which, though he knows it to be perfection, however great his faith, he can only hope for! The misfortunes of individuals, the decay of noble edifices, the overthrow of cities, the ruin of empires, all prepare the mind of man for the period of his

own dissolution. Most just and most gracious are the dispensations of the Supreme!"

"You observe with the eye of a moralist," said Lord Montague, smiling at the mingled seriousness and enthusiasm of her countenance and manner.

"Rather with the eye of a Christian, my lord," replied Miss Argyle, raising her glance to Heaven, and heaving such a sigh as the contemplation of the sky, illumed with the infinite variety of objects, produced by the influence of a resplendent, setting-sun, on clouds most fantastically combined and dispersed, always excites in the breast of sensibility.

Lord Montague looked up also; "it is beautiful, is it not?" said he, addressing himself rather to her actions than her words; "it is almost such a sun-set, as we might contemplate on the rock of the Acropolis. You would be delighted with Athens; you would see there much to excite reflection, much to admire, much to regret. Athens has about the

same resemblance to its former self, as the Romaic language to the pure Attic of Demosthenes."

"The delusion, which, a few moments since, might have led us to believe ourselves within the influence of an Athenian atmosphere, is entirely dissolved," said Lord Montague, looking up after they had walked some minutes in silence.

Miss Argyle observed the change in the aspect of the heavens; the clouds, that had lately appeared in so fantastic a variety of forms, surrounded by the most brilliant colouring of gold, were now congregated into one vast, dark mass, variegated only by a few shades of gloomy red. Whilst Miss Argyle yet looked, two heavy rolling clouds met each other; the electric fluid flashed from them; the thunder reverberated in the heavens; Lord Montague glanced at his companion, expecting to see her pale with alarm; her step indeed was stayed, but her cheek had not lost its hue; her countenance had changed only to acquire

sublimity; her eye was upraised and a tear trembled in it; it was a tear of awe and admiration, but it was totally distinct from fear.

"How beautifully the Koran speaks of it!" said she: 'It is GOD who causeth the lightning to appear unto you, to strike fear and to raise hope, and who formeth the pregnant clouds. The thunder celebrateth his praise, and the angels also, for fear of him. He sendeth his thunderbolts, and striketh therewith whom he pleaseth, while they dispute concerning GOD, for he is mighty in power.'"

"It is awful, but beautiful," said Lord Montague; "you can form no idea of its force on the Pyrenees; the tone itself is not only tenfold more powerful, but the echoes repeat it in every variety of cadence, until it appears to have travelled through the whole empire of sound. Language cannot describe the effect it produces on a thinking mind: none but those who have heard it, can form an adequate idea of it."

Miss Argyle stood with her arms folded across her breast; — the expression of her eye was so forcible, that Lord Montague gazed on it, until his very delight became pain; — it expressed all that glow of soul which he had admired in the maids of Athens; all the sublimity of a Christian; all the energy of a mind, lofty, towering above the beings who surrounded her, and yet sinking into nothing, on viewing the vast, immeasurable distance between the created and the Creator — between HIM whose arm hurls the thunder-bolt, and man who dies beneath the blow.

Turning her eyes from the direction they had hitherto taken, Miss Argyle saw at a short distance from them, standing in the centre of a lawn, the Bishop of ———. "Let us hasten to the venerable man," she said, pointing him out to Lord Montague's notice; "no scene can be better adapted to his society, than that in which the Supreme Being himself is almost visible."

Lord Montague immediately obeyed,

yet he could not but acknowledge, that he did it with reluctance; it arose from a pardonable desire of monopolizing a very lovely and uncommon being, who not only could comprehend *his* feelings, but also freely expressed her own in his presence.

"You are enjoying this imposing and beautiful scene," said the Bishop.

"We are," returned Lord Montague: "it is impossible, in such a season as this, not to reflect, that, however glorious the light of science may be, some fine feelings are lost in the blaze of it.

"Philosophy has now taught us tranquillity amid the crash of elements. Before the causes of natural phenomena were so generally explained, the majestic war of a thunder-storm like this, would have impressed man with an idea of the more immediate presence of the Deity, and have bent him, with reverential awe, to the earth. In this enlightened age, even the peasant has learned to hear the thunder with unconcern; and returning

from his labour, sees the meteor descend, or the electric fluid stream through the air, with a calmness approaching to apathy."

"'Tis most true; and I would to God that these were the worst evils resulting from the loss of those simple feelings, which formerly led mankind to see a prodigy in the falling star, or hear an omen in the thunder," replied the Bishop; "but, alas! how many superficial minds rest satisfied with the information philosophy affords, and seek no farther. Have we not seen, my lord, men of the brightest talents,—philosophers whose researches have ranked them amongst the benefactors of mankind,—become so dazzled by their discoveries in the minor operations of nature, as to deny or forget the action of the Almighty mind, and suffer themselves to be led by some scientific *ignis fatuus*, from the pure sunshine of religion, to seek a refuge they know not where, having left the bosom of their God. Philosophy, pursued upon

fixed principles, and within certain limits, is, perhaps, the next blessing to Revelation: it is then pure and rational; not employed in useless disquisitions, or deluded by uncertain speculations, but proceeding to investigate facts simply as it finds them; not combining their results to establish some favourite system, but carefully treasuring the information they contain to elucidate some future difficulty, or to excite feelings of awe and admiration for that wisdom and power which, at first, called the whole into existence, and still acts with the same energy in the minutest particle of creation. What being, my lord, who, wrapt in speechless admiration, considers the sublimity and splendour of the midnight heavens, will say, that his feelings are not elevated and refined by a knowledge of the magnitude, distance, and velocity of those planetary worlds? Who will say, *that* science is not a blessing, which enables us to trace the operation of the Almighty hand, and to 'look

through nature up to nature's God?' How miserably is the blessing perverted, when it is made the vehicle of fantastic and delusive opinions, — when it is used as a destructive engine, and applied to shake the foundation of civilized society, — when its discoveries are opposed to the testimony of inspiration, — when the reasoner coolly tells you, that from many appearances in nature, he is led to doubt the authenticity of his Bible; pronounces on the falsehood of its chronology from an inspection, perchance, of volcanic lava, or some data equally uncertain, and rejects as false some important historic fact, on account of a new geographical discovery! To combat its abuses would be a Sisyphean task. When the mind is in this degraded state of infatuation, its errors rise in such swift succession, that, like the many-headed Hydra, defeat appears only to increase its vitality. Earth seems to be an exhausted subject; and that which is falsely termed philosophy, flushed with the audacity of triumph,

endeavours to combine itself with the mind of the Almighty. It would penetrate with blasphemous precipitation into the mystery of his arrangements; it would demand if other worlds, like ours, teem with existence; it would scrutinize the capacities of their inhabitants, and ascertain the term of their duration. The idea of the pious Psalmist, 'such knowledge is too high for me; I cannot attain unto it,' seems never to have entered into the fevered imaginations of these men.

"We know, my Lord, that these speculations must always end in disappointment; may we not fear, alas! that they but too often lead to despair?"

"Such principles," replied Lord Montague, "operate in the moral world like volcanoes in the natural one; their internal action convulses the frame of society, until, at length, the public avowal of them, like an eruption, carries with it all that is venerable on earth, buries in one common ruin every higher attribute of

man, and at once degrades him beneath the brute, that roams the desert for his prey. The situation of France in 1792 presented the most terrible climax of philosophical depravity; every religious restraint being removed, every moral sentiment was overwhelmed in the torrent of infidelity. Force and fraud became the sole arbiters. Yet, with the record of those scenes of anarchy, even now fresh on the page of history, is it not astonishing that the self-same principles of equality should find advocates in our own land, and often amongst that very class of men, who, rich without talent, have nothing to expect from a Revolution, but the certain loss of what they at present possess?"

"It is with politics as with religion," said the Bishop; "in both, the grand bulk of mankind are contented to form their opinion on that of others. Indeed, even those who are most anxious to investigate political subjects are deficient in the *science of politics*, because its

sources of information are attainable by so few. All men may observe the power and action of the vast machine of government, but few, very few, can examine its mechanism, and a still smaller proportion are acquainted with those secret springs, which regulate its motion and direct its energy. That judgment which is deduced from the *result* of any measure, is delusive and uncertain: the best concerted schemes, the wisest arrangements, are often frustrated by events which no human foresight could prevent or foresee. Is it possible that any man can form a just opinion of the propriety of a measure without taking into consideration all those circumstances, that may render it necessary, and surveying with care the different bearings of the subject?

"It often happens, that the causes of an act are such as cannot be made public, without defeating the very end they are employed to gain. In such a case, the measure can be vindicated only by its success; but its failure is urged by



designing men as a proof of the insufficiency of the legislature. The agents of faction become active, and many such characters as your lordship has mentioned, are the dupes of their artifice. They call loudly for a change, without being able to suggest one rational expedient to render it beneficial. They would agitate the peaceful bosom of society into a tempest, without considering, that, in all human probability, themselves would be shipwrecked in the storm. They forget, that the opulence they at present possess, is the sole object of attainment to those levellers, whose principles they profess to admire. The desperate remedies proposed by these political charlatans to the body politic, are, in fact, the means employed by impatient heirs to accelerate its dissolution; not the advice of friends, anxious to renovate and improve its vigour."

Lord Montague had listened attentively to his venerable friend; yet during the period that friend had spoken, his

eyes were fixed on Miss Argyle's face. He had admired the eloquent silence of her countenance; he saw how fully she entered into the Bishop's feelings, how well she appeared to understand and appreciate his sentiments: perhaps, at no moment had he obtained so deep an insight into her mind, as the present afforded to him.

She had walked regardless of the war of the elements, every faculty absorbed in deep attention. The expansion of her brow at some moments, and its slight contraction at others, had marked, most eloquently, the different gradations of approbation with which she had listened to the remarks of her companions. Her whole soul beamed in her eye; her heart beat, even perceptibly, with her ardent desire to comprehend entirely the force of their observations; and it was easy to discern when her mind had grasped the whole power of the idea, by the heightened colour of her cheek, and the increased ardour of her countenance.

"She *is* capable of enthusiasm," said Lord Montague's heart, with a bound of transport.

The lightning, which had hitherto played most beautifully in the higher regions of the air, at this moment ran along the ground in all the horrid splendour of a forked flash. "Let us hasten," said Miss Argyle: "whilst we could observe this phenomenon with the conviction, that, in its natural course, it could not injure us, it would have been weak to quit the place; but now that it assumes a really alarming aspect, it were presumption to remain."

She had scarcely ceased speaking, when a powerful stream of electric fire passed in a spiral line, scarcely perceptible to a careless observer, round the trunk of a venerable ash-tree, that skirted a flourishing grove: its vegetation was blasted for ever!

They entered the house. Lord Montague had seen Miss Argyle courageous without temerity, sensible without pe-

dantry, dignified without haughtiness; so far he comprehended the character: the succeeding scene entirely banished these impressions.

Miss Argyle indolently threw herself on a sofa; she rested her arm on it, and supported her head with her hand. Lord Montague observed her attentively;—her gaze was fixed on the scene without. It rained heavily, but the thunder had ceased; vegetation felt the cheering influence of the shower; the clouds were dispersed, and the broad disk of the setting sun was again visible in the heavens.

"A famous storm!" said Surrey; "it's devilish awkward walking in the lightning though, I say, Miss Argyle."

"Is it?" said Miss Argyle; "I was not aware of exhibiting particular awkwardness just then."

"By Jove, I did'nt mean so;—confounded queer, and all that, you know. I remember now, young Will Ferryman said, that two clouds, each bearing an

equal quantity of electric matter,—by the bye, have you ever been electrified, Miss Argyle? or have you ever witnessed the Galvanic shock? I attended all ——'s lectures in London; and, at last, the fellow, from some suggestion I made him, came to me one morning about an experiment,—an exhibition of the Aurora borealis; the impetus which forces a cloud bearing electrical fluid; the attractive power it possesses; and the theory of the magnet. G—d! I so teazed the fellow:—'My dear sir,' says I, 'do you know, that nothing takes now but optics? A pair of new-fashioned *lunettes* would make your fortune; I've had some thoughts on the subject myself,' says I, 'and, indeed, I'll give you my plan, for which you may get a patent, if you will. You know,' says I, 'the simple truth, that diverging rays, falling on a lens, form a cone, whose apex is the radiant point, and the lens is its base.'— Talking of a cone, though, Miss Argyle, I'll tell you how I once cheated a mer-

chant out of a sugar-loaf. The fellow had a vast fancy to be fashionable, and drive, and bet at Newmarket, and all that;' 'so,' says I, 'my dear Joe, you see I'm going to Newmarket, and my old nurse lives there. I'll give you a drive, and introduce you to some good company there, by Jove I will,' says I; 'but, you know, I must take something to my old dame,—suppose a sugar-loaf,' says I, 'and I can have it of you.' So I got the sugar, and my gentleman brings me the bill;—'EDWARD SURREY, ESQ. *bought of* JOSEPH RYLAND.'—'How cursedly vulgar, my good fellow!' says I. 'I can't take a man to Newmarket who writes such a bill as this, 'pon honour; so, if I have the sugar, good bye t'ye.' 'D—n the bill,' says he; 'I'll make you a present of it.' 'Come along, then, Joe,' says I; and off we set at a devil of a rate. I tilted him over at the first toll-bar, 'pon my soul."

"Did you indeed?" said Miss Argyle, with a countenance and voice of stupid wonder.

"*I did*," replied Surrey, with an emphatic nod. "Lord bless you; why that's nothing to what I've done to those cits."

"I have had the pleasure, however," said Lord Montague, "of knowing men in the mercantile line, of superior abilities, integrity, and information. That class of men have been exhibited, on our stages, in a light both absurd and unjust. A true British merchant is, undoubtedly, one of the first characters under heaven."

Surrey coloured, bit his lip, played with his watch-chain, and was instantly silent.

"They have indeed, as your lordship observes," said Miss Wodehouse, "a vast share of common sense;—I know no class of men, who possess more."

Whilst Lord Montague was speaking, Miss Argyle had walked across the room, and seated herself at a harp. She swept her hand several times across the strings in wild discordance, and, at length, played a quadrille.

Surrey started up, and seized the hand of Lady Clervaux: the rest joined them, and formed into a set. Lord Montague and the Bishop alone kept their seats.

"Trifling, inconsistent being!" thought the former, observing the sparkling countenance of Miss Argyle, breathing the very soul of frolic. "Is *this* the buoyant elasticity of spirits the Bishop so warmly admires?—*this* the being of whom he speaks so enthusiastically? Thou fascinating trifler! What reflecting man would dare to trust his happiness—his honour, to thee!"

CHAP. V.

"Without one atom of reflection,
No candidate at an election,
Did ever labour more, and fume, and sweat,
To make a fellow change his coat,
And bless him with the casting vote,
Than this dear man" ———

PINDAR.

"Be still thyself that open path of truth
Which led thee here, let manhood first pursue;
Retain the sweet simplicity of youth,
And all thy virtue dictates dare to do."

MASON.

THE Parliament of 18— was dissolved; one of the members of —— county had given general dissatisfaction to his constituents, and therefore durst not stand the event of another election; — Henry Wharton Grosvenor offered himself as a candidate for the vacated seat.

The interest of his own family in the county was extensive; — the degree of affinity in which he stood to the well-

known and popular Bishop of ——, was also a circumstance greatly in his favour; — the separate and hitherto divided interests of Mr. Walworth and Sir Thomas Clervaux were united for him; — and he appeared a powerful opponent to the younger son of a neighbouring Duke, who had already begun his canvass.

The ladies at Mr. Walworth's were exceedingly anxious for the success of Mr. Grosvenor; — Miss Argyle was interested above them all.

If the day's canvass had been successful, every motion, every word, spoke her satisfaction; if unsuccessful, the next morning she was riding through the county town, where she was already a popular favourite; — she called at the houses of the tradesmen — gratified them yet more by the courtesy of her manners than by the extensive orders she gave them — chatted with their wives — praised the beauty, or accomplishments, or docility of their daughters, as the case seemed to require, — captivating some

by her beauty — more by her wit, her vivacity, and her condescension: — in short, Miss Argyle was a champion, who could scarcely fail of securing success to any cause, in which she embarked.

Lord Montague was an attentive observer. "She certainly loves Grosvenor!" thought he; — "the excellent Bishop will rejoice in the completion of his wishes; *they* will be happy: — that ought to be enough for me; — why should I remain to witness an event, which cannot concern me? She certainly loves him! — perhaps — no — all things considered, it is not *very* surprising!"

There were others, who traced Miss Argyle's earnest endeavours in Grosvenor's behalf, to the same source.

"Mr. Grosvenor," said Lady Anne de Burgh to Miss Argyle, in Lord Montague's presence, "Mr. Grosvenor is a happy man!"

"Why so happy just at this time, Lady Anne? The fatigue of an election, more especially of a contested one, does

not conduce greatly to the happiness of a man who is accustomed to the best society, and derives gratification from it!" said Miss Argyle, turning her dark eye full on Lady Anne.

"I do not mean, that there is any great happiness to be derived in going from one house to another, and shaking all men by the hand, of whatever rank and degree they may be: on the contrary, I feel, that all this must be excessively disagreeable," replied Lady Anne.—"These circumstances will cease to be regarded as inconveniences by Mr. Grosvenor, since they have been the means of discovering to him how warm a friend he has in Miss Argyle."

"That is to say, my dear Lady Anne, Miss Argyle is in love with Mr. Grosvenor," looking at Lady Anne with an expression which, without audacity, seemed to penetrate to her very soul.

Lord Montague was surprised by the suddenness with which Miss Argyle thus

plainly asserted a fact, that Lady Anne's sentence had only implied.

"How?" said Lady Anne, blushing consciously.

"That is precisely what you meant to say, my dear Lady Anne, though consideration for me, perhaps, prevented your expressing yourself thus openly. Hear me then; — I do *not* love Mr. Grosvenor; there is no probability that I ever shall."

Lord Montague changed his seat; a tightness across his chest had hitherto rendered it difficult for him to breathe; that oppression was suddenly removed; and he could not exactly define the sensations, that dilated his bosom.

"Without wishing to see me figure a female Machiavel," continued Miss Argyle, "my father thought it necessary, that I should be perfectly well acquainted with the legislature of my country; he gave me some insight into the intrigues of ministers, and the factions of demagogues; to say the truth, I always comprehended the dangers resulting from the latter as

exceeding those resulting from the former, perhaps because every one can see the dirt in the streets, whilst only those in the gallery perceive the dust on the top of the pulpit. I learnt from him to consider the characters of members of the Lower House, as it is called, as a concern of vital importance to the state: this principle, early infused into my mind, and carefully nourished there, will not easily be eradicated; at every possible opportunity, it is thrusting itself into action. You will allow, that the present occasion is the proper field for its exertion; I have known Mr. Grosvenor's character longer than I have known himself; since the commencement of our acquaintance, the traits I have observed of it, have greatly increased those favourable impressions, which I formerly received: bad indeed must be the natural disposition of that man, who has been the pupil of the Bishop of ———, and yet is not well-principled! Grosvenor has also strong sense and great eloquence; is well acquainted with the

local interests of ——, and the nature of the part he undertakes to sustain. There are few men, therefore, who ought to be preferred before him in the point we are now considering, and certainly not Lord Percival Lorn; the utter incompetency of whom to fill properly the situation he is striving to gain, is well known to us; he is a libertine, a gambler, almost uneducated, debilitated in constitution, contemptible in principle. Who could calmly support the idea of Harry Grosvenor's yielding to this man? Learn, my dear Lady Anne, that Iss Argyle may exert every power in *such* a cause, without *being in love* with the man for whom she so strives!"

The animation of her countenance increased as she spoke; her dark hair, which she had thrown back two or three times by the emphatic motion of her head, hung in some disorder down her face; her complexion was heightened; even her neck glowed; the fire of her eye was brighter, its hue seemed darker, its look

of intelligence more piercing. "She *is* beautiful!" thought Lord Montague, as if this were the moment of discovery.

The canvassing party, at this instant, entered: the eyes of Miss Argyle asked how they had succeeded, before her tongue could make the appeal.

"Far, far beyond our expectations," said Grosvenor, answering that glance; "to-day our good genius presides; we meet nothing but smiles, and eager promises of support."

"By Jove, you may thank me for it; I lay claim to that part of the affair," said Surrey, forgetting, in his eagerness to speak well of himself, that Lord Montague was present; a circumstance which generally kept him silent; "I know a good deal about this sort of things; I canvassed once with Bob Newport, two years since: old member died, Bob stood for the place. A devilish clever fellow, too, only so confounded shy. 'D—n it, Ned,' says he, 'I shall never stand it!'—'Poh, poh! man,' says I, 'never fear

we manage 'em;' and we did manage, notwithstanding his sheepishness was always in the way; strike me unfashionable, if modesty is not the most cursedly vulgar, *outré*, foolish thing in existence. May I grow old and ugly, if I should not be devilish vexed if I had it!"

"I am sure nobody could think you such a fool for a moment, Surrey," said Lady Clervaux; "a modest man is so horridly unfashionable."

"Your ladyship is right," said Sir Thomas; "*horridly unfashionable!* a most exact and correct definition of the character. Apropos, my dear Lady Clervaux, I hope I have the honour of seeing you better."

"Inexpressibly obliged, Sir Thomas; much better, thank you," replied the fashionable wife; "an affair of this kind wants a good deal of self-possession, Surrey, and of assurance into the bargain."

"True, faith!" said Surrey; "a good deal of fashion, too;—'pon my soul, I

don't know how Grosvenor would get on, with his straight-forward way of asking for a man's vote, if it were not for *me*; he shakes hands with 'em, to be sure, and all that; but 'pon honour that's not enough. 'My dear fellow,' says I to an overgrown alderman, catching hold of the button of his coat, 'what a charming place you've got here! I vow to you the villas of one half of our nobility are not to be compared to it. So much taste displayed in the disposition of the gardens! such a happy diversity of grass plot, parterre, and rectangular gravel walks! so different from the mazy serpentine paths that encumber our modern pleasure-grounds. If Grosvenor succeeds,' says I, 'a capital kind of fellow he is, I do assure you, my dear Alderman, — keeps the best cook of any man with whom I have acquaintance — great connections abroad — always well supplied with turtle, such turtle as has seldom fallen to your lot to taste — always sends me half of his receipts from abroad of that

nature: when I settle here,' says I, 'which I shall certainly do if Grosvenor succeeds, I shall give capital dinners; Lord bless you! the London corporation feast nothing to them; and I shall make a point of inviting you, my dear Alderman,' says I; 'I shall indeed; for curse me,' says I, 'if I don't think you a devilish honest fellow.' G—d! how he strutted and gobbled his importance like a Turkey! 'And has the candidate,' says he, 'really such connections abroad, and such opportunities of getting turtle, and such an excellent cook, and all that?' —'Has he!' says I; 'hark ye; if you doubt my word, you see, my good friend, the acquaintance betwixt us must fall to the ground: I am a man of honour, Mr. Justice!'—'No offence, I hope, my good Sir,' says he; 'I promise your friend my vote and interest; and if you'll have the kindness just to send me word, a week or two before you come into our neighbourhood, what day you intend to give your first dinner, I'll take

care and not disappoint you: only let there be plenty of turtle!' says he.— 'My dear friend,' says I, 'I'll send you *two* as soon as Grosvenor's returned member, depend upon it!'—'I am greatly obliged,' says he.—'So am I,' says I; and off I set with the old fellow's vote, interest, and thanks into the bargain."

"Bribery and corruption—bribery and corruption," said Sir Thomas Clervaux, laughing heartily; "you have infringed the statute in such case made and provided."

"Strike me quizzical if I have," said Surrey; "what the deuce? may n't I promise a good old fellow my acquaintance, and turtle to boot, without being accused of bribery?"

"Clean against the statute, Mr. Surrey," returned the Baronet, "clean against the statute!"

"Poh! poh! I tell you I am on the safe side of the hedge: *ecce signum;* I have the example of a man who knows

the law with me, Sir Thomas," returned Surrey. "You stayed a long time with the old Scotch landlord of the ——— inn; thinks I, all's not to our wishes with that fellow; I must to him.— 'A fine day, my excellent friend!' says I. —'The day's weel eneugh, mon,' says he, doggedly.—'Exactly what I mean to say, Sir,' said I; 'in favour of us canvassers; no dirt about.'—'Ye maun tell that tull anither, mon,' says he; 'ye'll be fash'd to clane the dirt frae your heels, I ken, and from your honds, ye daft callants.'— 'I hope we've your good wishes with us, my sensible friend,' said I, shaking him heartily by the hand. 'Aweel, aweel," said he, 'I'se hardly ken an ye belang tull the laird.'—'You mean Lord Percival Lorn,' says I. 'Hout awa, mon,' says he, 'an yoursel dinna ken that better than I do: I'm nae for the laird, sic a quantity o' pride aboon him; I'se nae gie ye my vote.'—'And pray,' says I, 'to whom will you give it, my clever fellow? to yonder gentleman, Mr. Grosvenor?'—

'Nae, nae,' says he; 'nae that I ken ony harm o' the younker; but I'se nae spake agen the maister.'—'And who is the master?' says I. 'An ye dinna ken the maister,' says he, 'ye maun gang your gait for me; sic a brave Inglisher I'se never seen on the sooth side the Tweed; I'll get tree dinners for un this next week! twa the week after: the gentleman-hunter's club,—ye'll ken it weel, maybe,—henceforward dine at the ——— public; forbye, I dinna change my mind; sae the maister's promised; and he winna break his word, mon, and I'll keep my ain.'—'Who is the master?' says I again. 'Who? dinna ye ken Sir Tummas Clervaux?'—Ha! ha! thereabouts are you, my good Sir Thomas?—Three dinners!—bribery and corruption—bribery and corruption—clean against the statute!"

Miss Wodehouse, who had entered with Lady Clervaux shortly after the canvassing party, said, in a slow, measured voice,

"More wit than sense, more mimicry than wit."

"Thank-ye, Miss Wodehouse; thank ye," said Surrey; "excellently well hit off.—Ha, ha! Sir Thomas! the ladies won't let you escape, you see. Aye, by the L—d, Grosvenor has fallen asleep. —Barbarian!

"Awake! arise! or be for ever fallen!"

"I beg your pardon, upon my honour," said Grosvenor, raising his head from the arm of the sofa. "Complete weariness must plead my excuse. What have I lost by my unpoliteness?"

"Mr. Surrey's admirable caricatures," said Miss Argyle, "He has entertained us with an account of the manner in which he procured some votes for you; and, moreover, he has been proving to us, by his practice, that corruption and bribery are not synonymous terms."

"I am more thankful to my fatigue than I can express," said Grosvenor. "My friends tell me, and perhaps truly, that I make but an indifferent canvasser;

that, but for their support, I should not be able to stand a day against Lord Percival Lorn. The fact is, I *cannot* condescend to make promises I do not intend to perform. I *will* not perform what is against my conscience; and I *cannot* flatter those men who require it, and who, consequently, most deserve condemnation."

"Admirable! God grant, Mr. Grosvenor, that you may be successful. Happy were it for our country, if such were the sentiments of all who constitute that assembly which is the safeguard of her liberties, and the admiration of the world," said Miss Argyle; and her constantly-varying complexion heightened as her manner gained increasing animation.

"Thrice happy our country, if they who profess such sentiments, would also practise them," said Lady Anne, with an equivocal emphasis.

"Woe to the wretch who understands what virtue is, who believes its existence,

and yet dares to disobey its precepts!" said Grosvenor, raising his deep-blue eyes to Lady Anne's, with an expression of dignity that felt itself insulted by the implied suspicion.

"This is very sublime, doubtless," said Sir Thomas Clervaux; "but, unfortunately, it will not do for the world we live in, more especially during the time of election."

"Harry Grosvenor," said Miss Argyle, and it was one of the peculiarities of her manner, that, in addressing a person very earnestly on an important subject, she constantly used their christian appellation: "Harry Grosvenor, believe Sir Thomas mistaken. Look into your own heart, and does it not tell you, that virtue must be obeyed consistently, or not at all? If it is to be rejected when vice may be more useful, it will never exist when the multitude is concerned. They who can appear virtuous or vicious at will, are never — trust me, they are *never* really good; they are only hypocrites."

" Lovely, admirable Miss Argyle!" said Grosvenor kissing the hand, that had, as she was speaking, occasionally pressed his arm, for when earnestly conversing she had much and very impressive action; " God forbid, that I should live to forfeit the good opinion you entertain of me! God forbid, that I should ever swerve from the avowed opinions of such a Mentoria!"

" Your Calypso must not hear you say so," said Lady Anne, in a voice half trembling, half haughty.

Grosvenor raised his eyes again to her face; it was blanched; his own glowed more deeply; he relinquished the hand of Miss Argyle, and again buried his head on the arm of the sofa.

Lord Montague had been a silent and deeply observing spectator; he saw, he heard, he compared, and from thence he drew these conclusions:

That Miss Argyle, as she herself had acknowledged, had received the most favourable impressions of Grosvenor, before the period of his actual introduction

to her; that her own observation had not only confirmed, but strengthened such impressions; that already she felt the warmest admiration for him; that on every occasion she manifested the high esteem in which she held him, by interesting herself most powerfully for him; that the purest love was nothing more than admiration and esteem mingled; that if any thing were wanting to confirm this sentiment, Grosvenor's general conduct and attentions to her would so confirm it; that Miss Argyle, by not understanding the real nature of the sentiments by which she was affected, was in no state to repress them; consequently, in such a mind as hers, by being indulged, they would become immutable; finally, that in all probability she and Mr. Grosvenor would be united.

Lord Montague started at this very natural inference; he recollected over again all the circumstances which had induced it; the conviction that Miss Argyle would indeed be the wife of Mr.

Grosvenor, again forced itself on him; he contemplated with his mental eye, the satisfaction such a *denouement* would afford to his excellent friend, the Bishop of——; he calculated on the probable —it was not, perhaps, too much to say the *certain* felicity, that must attend such an union; all the bearings of the subject promised happily: and yet, Lord Montague was astonished and alarmed when he turned his contemplation to himself, and felt that the prospect of so much felicity was anguish to him.

He endeavoured to trace the cause of that anguish; it originated, he conceived, from past events which had deeply affected him, and the recollection of which, the train of thought in which he had indulged, had rendered more forcible. To this cause was attributed also that vacuum of heart, that aching agony that throbbed at his breast and temples, as he thought on the satisfaction the Bishop would enjoy, when he should communicate to him the result of these observations.

CHAP. VI.

" Aurea sunt nunc secula: plurimus auro
Venit honos: auro conciliatur amor."

OVID.

" 'Tis all in vain
To tamper with a crazy brain
Without trepanning of the skull,
As often as the moon's at full?"

HUDIBRAS.

" *Mon Dieu!*" said Surrey entering the house at the close of the third day's canvass; — " I am fatigued — completely cut up — annihilated. My dear Miss Wodehouse, do have the kindness to reach me a chair."

Miss Wodehouse raised her indignant eyes from her work; and cast them down again in impenetrable silence.

" God bless me!" said Surrey, throwing himself on a *chaise longue*, " how cruel you are to us poor wretches, who are compelled to stand 'the pelting of the pitiless storm,' of stones, filth, and

every plebeian weapon during a whole day! — d—n the mob! if their man *would* start, who the devil was to help it?" —

"Lord Percival Lorn! — is he gone?" said Lady Anne anxiously.

"No, c—se *him;* his green flags, his independence, his annual parliaments, his universal suffrage, and his ten thousand palpable gags, he is *not!* — The favour of the populace, that is the mobility, has hitherto been divided between their green rascal, and their pink-*cockaded* simpleton, Sir Vicary Villars; — the latter has thought proper to start, not five hours since; the enraged mob have directed their fury against poor Grosvenor, his blue flags of 'heaven's own hue,' — and us his indefatigable friends and supporters in general. Look at me, do I not 'bear my blushing honours thick upon me?'" —

Surrey's elegant lounging coat was completely covered with dirt, and the sleeves almost torn away. "C—se the

coat!" said he," I don't mind that; but what the devil am I to do for a hat?— *This*, the most becoming thing ever worn, carried every thing before it; by Jove, I thought high crowns had had *their* day! I planned low, with broad brinks instantly —egad! the next day Bond-street was filled with them; nothing else to be seen!— D——'d unlucky, to lose it just now!— such a confounded distance from London!—If I send express, shan't get another these four days. Strike me inelegant, if a crowd is not the most devilish *bore* in nature!"—

"Is Grosvenor hurt?" said Lady Anne and Miss Argyle in a breath.

"Hurt? Good God! did you ever see any thing so completely spoiled? To reduce a man of fashion to the pitiable situation of appearing in a vulgar high-crown, or shutting himself up when his friends want him abroad! D—'d uncivil!—The tailor's well enough, I hear! —send him my poor, stylish brown *lounge* for a pattern—get another made direct-

ly! Grosvenor hurt? oh, aye, true: yes; a great, ugly-looking, devil of a stone, just caught him under the temple! he staggered a little, but didn't faint, thank the stars! for we were surrounded by a shoal of green rascals who would certainly have trodden him to death."

"And where is he? for God's sake, speak!" said Lady Anne, pale and trembling.

"Quite well, quite well, 'pon honour! just gone to wash away the blood and other marks of his having been within reach of a martyr's crown! — Don't be alarmed, he bears it all exceedingly well: Grosvenor knows what a mob and what an enemy is: the hero is not to be terrified by a crowd of women and children! How grateful are the people to those to whom they are indebted for their very power of bestowing insult on their defenders!

"Grosvenor is not hurt, then?" said Miss Argyle, in a tone that seemed to

demand the exact truth, without softening or exaggeration.

"He is *not*, on my honour," replied Surrey. "Yes," he continued, "Sir Vicary Villars has really decamped: you may now see that silly nephew of his pulling every passing stranger by the coat. Ask what he has told them;—each one replies, 'Uncle Vicary has resigned!' Thank God, the fact's pretty generally understood by this; no harm in the world done by it, except that their highnesses, the mob, have thought proper to have recourse to missile weapons of the most annoying description. One poor fellow was struck by a stone just under the breast: I saw him stagger, and had him conveyed into a house. A fat, ugly little fellow of an apothecary followed us with his lean apprentice—a new edition of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. I got Sancho to examine the fellow. 'O, not hurt, sir; not in the least,' says he; 'the force of the stone took him unprepared—had not time to

brace his nerves, so staggered a little, that's all, sir.'—'Good God,' says I, 'don't you see the man's dying?'—'Oh no; not at all, sir,' says he; 'quite mistaken, sir, take my word;—will be better in a few minutes.'—'Look, sir, pray,' said the Quixotic apprentice, twitching him by the sleeve. 'D—n you, hold your tongue,' says Sancho, in a half-whisper; 'what's the use of meddling with the fellow? who pays apothecaries at elections?' At that instant the patient died. ''Pon my soul,' says he, 'I was just beginning to suspect that something worse was the matter than I conjectured at first; I was just thinking of a remedy.'—'You villainous rascal,' says I, losing all patience, 'is *this* the way you *murder?* You feared to lose your fee; take it now!' I laid my whip about his shoulders. God, how he scampered! Grimaldi's antics nothing to his, 'pon my soul."

"Had the man a family?" said Miss Argyle.

"Oh no, no," returned Surrey; "not at all; quite a young man, poor fellow! Sir Vicary's desertion cost him his life — all the harm it did, as I said before; and, to tell you the truth, I have — upon my soul I have, a great idea that *I* sent him away."

"Lord! Surrey, did you indeed? How? How?" said Lady Clervaux.

"Why, you see, Miss Argyle," replied Surrey, who thought it reflected honour on him to address Miss Argyle whenever she was present, because he had discernment sufficient to perceive that all *felt*, though they might not *acknowledge*, her superiority: "knew perfectly well what he wanted, so settled him at starting, ma'am; — drew a picture of his canvass, so like, that, 'pon my soul, every body recognises it: settled him at once — made him ashamed of his friends, ma'am. Hark ye, Miss Argyle, I'll read to you that part that did *his* business: —

"Like the frogs round King Log, came a horrible
crew,
And well might he boast with such help what he'd
do;
For, like Absalom's army, each blackguard was
there,
Either starved, or in debt, or misguided by beer."

Wrote it for the mob, you see, Miss Argyle; mixed it to a proper consistency, and all that, you know — understood perfectly well how to fix Sir Vicary — wants nothing but a place, ma'am, as I say in the next verse: —

"Shall such place-hunting paupers sit round the
green table?
Will you send to the senate such villainous rabble?
No, never, my boys; just as well might this cann
Be return'd, dress'd in ribands, a parliament-man."

Knew perfectly well, Miss Argyle, the key he started in — wound him up in the same note — did him at once, once for all! 'Pon my veracity, his whole party could'nt raise a *da capo!* Made a capital allusion to the *colours* — great thing that, you know, with the mob, Miss Argyle — Lord Percival's green a

mere artifice—his lordship knows that many who would shrink from yellow *expressed,* don't hesitate to adopt it when only *implied;*—Sir Vicary's confounded pink all the same—true blue never ashamed to show itself. You shall hear, you shall hear, Miss Argyle:—

> "The man who can't purchase a horse, buys a donkey."

These allusions introduced always in things of this kind, intended for the mob, with capital effect; they understand images of that sort, you see, Miss Argyle; any thing classical, that costs the composer a devilish deal of trouble, won't do for 'em;—

> "The man who can't purchase a horse, buys a donkey,
> And the showman that can't raise a bear, shows a monkey;
> But freemen should still keep this maxim in view,
> *We'll have nothing at all, if we can't have* TRUE BLUE!"

Quite settled him, Miss Argyle; made him *flit,* as they say here in the north—*flit,* ma'am; leave me for electioneering,

Miss Argyle! Lady Jane Lorn herself, who writes for her brother, and speaks for her brother, and gets most of his votes for her brother, positively nothing to me; is she, Sir Thomas?" turning to the Baronet who, accompanying Grosvenor, at that instant entered.

"Is Lady Jane with him?" demanded Lady Clervaux, preventing the reply of Sir Thomas; "dear! how very odd it was of you, Surrey, and the rest of you, not to tell me before!"

"Positively, my dear Lady Clervaux, never once thought of mentioning her," replied Surrey; "devilish odd too, that I did not;—for she was always popping her ugly head in one's face, demanding a nod, or some mark of recognizance from us; and 'pon my life, speaking to an ugly woman such a d—'d bore! the sight of one *ennuis* me horridly: could n't patronise such a sister or kinswoman for the universe: a great favorite her ladyship with the *canaille!* Lord Percival much indebted to her positively; her

influence restrained the plebeians from pelting him; not that I imagine his patrician head would have suffered much injury from its contact with a stone; for, you know, Miss Argyle, one may beat hard against a brick wall without disturbing any thing but a few grains of mortar."

"You ought to have told me of Lady Jane's being down here before," said Lady Clervaux, pettishly; "I'm sure she's the dearest friend I have; I always promised that she should be one of my bride-maids, but this nasty election prevented it!"

"Unfortunately for your veracity, Lady Clervaux," said Sir Thomas, "at the time of *our affair*, we were not acquainted with Grosvenor's intention of offering himself a candidate."

"It is of no use answering you, Sir Thomas, for you always make a point of contradicting me, so I don't intend to give myself the trouble of explaining;" said Lady Clervaux, turning contemptuously from him.

The baronet laughed; and he did not force risibility to conceal mortification; his lady's avowed indifference was to him one of the most "*n' importe*" affairs in existence; *une chose toute-a-fait de rien;* the great question, "*what is happiness?*" had never been seriously considered by him; marriage had always been regarded as an event that must of necessity happen some time or other; a pretty girl, a fashionable girl, a wealthy girl, was the only object his imagination had defined as the future partner of his life; Philippa Egerton was the reality of this picture; he married her; the same pursuits that had afforded him pleasure previously to that event still possessed all their early powers of charming; Lady Clervaux's enjoyments did not interfere with his; he amused himself with her when the weather, or weariness, led him to seek amusement distinct from his general routine; her childish airs of consequence and pettishness were as agreeable as her capricious fondness; he laughed at the

former, and received the latter with complaisance; with him, the only object in life was amusement, and *chasser l'ennui*; consequently he could not comprehend the existence of a happiness distinct from it.

"Dear Lady Jane!" resumed Philippa, "I'm sure I ought to have seen her sooner, for I've so *many* secrets to tell her! Besides, I dare say, she is not aware of my marriage! I suppose since this disagreeable contest's over, I may visit her; I shall take the carriage, and go to her early in the morning."

"No, no; come, faith! that's too bad!" said Surrey: "my dear Lady Clervaux, for Heaven's sake do not go to that green rascal, — positively no!"

"I'm sure I shall, Mr. Surrey: I think, upon my word, that I, a married woman, may surely go where I choose; I think I may be trusted to my own discretion, without being kept from erring by leading-strings; when I resigned the nursery, I resigned them also; for the

future I must be allowed to judge for myself; indeed I *will*: — I married that I might please myself, and I am certain that I will not take any body's opinion, unless I like it: I *will* go to Lady Jane to-morrow: I shall be with her at the —— Hotel, whilst Lord Percival and Mr. Grosvenor are chaired."

"'Pon honour, my dear Lady Clervaux," returned Surrey, "our party must not lose you; — confoundedly odd look, you know, and all that, whilst Sir Thomas is with us, — you with his lordship: no, no, by Jove you must not."

"*C'en vaut*," said Grosvenor, tired of her folly; "permit Lady Clervaux to please herself."

"There! you see, Mr. Surrey, of how little consequence Mr. Grosvenor considers my presence! — Thank Heaven, there *are* those who will be delighted to have me with them! though, indeed, however I might be entreated, let who will say I shall *not* go, I am determined on it; nothing can alter my resolution,

and I shall certainly be excessively angry with any one who opposes it: however, Sir Thomas, you might, I imagine, condescend to give your opinion."

"It is of no consequence at all, my dear," replied Sir Thomas, "whether Lord Percival or myself enjoy the honour of your presence; if you anticipate particular pleasure from the *bredi-breda* of his lordship, Heaven forbid that I should deprive you of it: besides, after the reiterated declarations you have just made, I perceive, upon the honour of a baronet and a very recently married man, that the only chance I have of escaping direct opposition to my will, is, by saying, — for God's sake please yourself."

Miss Argyle had, meanwhile, been conversing with Grosvenor on the subject of the election; Lord Montague had observed both attentively; he saw the most ardent admiration beaming in the eyes of the latter; he perceived also the same sentiment expressed in the eloquent countenance of the former; but he knew

perfectly well, that admiration, though frequently the precursor of love, is *not* the same sentiment. Miss Argyle always met Grosvenor with pleasure, but also without embarrassment: if any avowal of his opinions drew from her an exclamation of satisfaction, it was as reasonable to suppose that her emotion was excited by the opinion, as by the speaker: in short, it was evident that Miss Argyle esteemed and admired Grosvenor. Whether the combination of these feelings were, indeed, love, or whether it were the *preparation* for imbibing this passion, Lord Montague could not decide.

What were Miss Argyle's sentiments towards himself he discerned with his usual accuracy: her manner of addressing him was tinctured sometimes with respect, and always devoid of that seemingly conscious superiority with which she regulated the movements of the beings around her. Lord Montague justly placed this distinction to the account of his talents and extensive knowledge of

mankind; but this respect — this observance was, in no manner, allied to friendship: if she courted his society, he understood exactly that it arose from a desire of increasing her information by listening to remarks, which were applauded and appreciated for their justice, by men who knew the world, and which were more than commonly valuable to her, whose sphere of observation her age and sex had, of necessity, rendered confined.

"After all," thought Lord Montague, "is Miss Argyle *capable* of love? of that energy, that intense passion, that enthusiasm of affection, that fire of feeling, which, whilst it burns with such fervent heat towards one, being alone, becomes faint, deadened, and cold to all the world besides? Will not *love* in her soul, — or at least that which she will call *love*, — be rather a cool, deliberate calculation of her chance of happiness? She will speculate with caution; she will engage with hesitation; all her hopes of earthly happiness will not

be bound up in one object; a multiplicity of friendships will divide and distract her feelings: she is the *friend* of Lady Anne de Burgh, of Mrs. Walworth, of the Bishop; the *friend*, if no more, of Grosvenor, and of half a hundred others. If *he*, the selected one, he who should be the only beloved, the monopolizer of her soul's energies, the very idol whose shrine was her heart, from which no circumstance, no change, no caprice, should have power to remove him; if *he* were crushed by the blight of misfortune, would not she, with affections divided, turn from him to more prosperous friends? Oh, to be the object of a love whose impetuous tide knows no ebb! to be the centre of a system which should derive all its light and heat from me alone!—Where, where is that being who would delight to revive and engross the heart, which the fire of the passions has desolated? who would cling, like the ivy, more fondly to the ruins of that heart? whose love indeed would luxuriate most

in that soil, still scorched by the lava produced from the volcanic eruption of its energies? If the love of WOMAN is more than a fitful gleam of fanciful preference, it is, it *ought* to be, this intenseness, this devotedness, this agony of passion: calculation and deliberation is the prerogative of MAN—*why* does he not always exercise it?"

Lord Montague sighed profoundly; surrounded by the gay, the vivacious, and the happy, he felt himself alone; remembrance had set in array before him that boiling fervour of passion, of enthusiasm, which once had imparted the sun's own fire to his eye; which had given melody and depth to his voice; elasticity and firmness to his step. The present contrasted forcibly with the past; *then*, his own radiance had darted its beams on the beings that were in his circle; it had given a life, a soul, to each; *now*, that splendour was withdrawn; he saw those around him as they really were: he looked at Miss Argyle; *contrast* ren-

dered the present quiet indifference of her eye, vacancy; the calmness of her countenance, apathy: he delighted to see the diamond absorbing the rays of the meridian sun; its paly brightness in the shadow had, at such moments as this, no interest for him.

CHAP. VII.

"Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,
Weighs the men's wits against the lady's hair;
The doubtful beam long nods from side to side,
At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside."

POPE.

"What would you have, you curs
That like not peace nor war?
The one affrights you, the other makes you proud:
He that trusts to you
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
Where foxes, geese."

SHAKSPEARE.

"Thrice happy isle, where every seventh year,
Presents the pleasing gewgaw of a chair;
When, tost in air, triumphant members ride,
So smooth, so easy, and so free from pride."

HUGHES.

"A sword is upon the liars, and they shall dote."

JEREMIAH.

It may not be improper to take a cursory view of the situation of affairs in the Borough of ——, at the time Lord Percival Lorn and Mr. Grosvenor became candidates.

Its inhabitants were industrious mechanics and manufacturers, whose ideas were respectively bounded by the symbol of their occupations; each formed his opinion of the world in general, by what was passing in his own immediate circle. The horrors of intellectual darkness were, however, in some measure dissipated by the busy hum of business, and the different occurrences attending the general scuffle for aggrandizement. To the contracted view of these people the most trifling elevation appeared glorious. It seemed to raise them, for a moment, above the level of their unlettered associates, and bestowed that consequence attendant upon office, which Shakspeare has remarked as visible, even in the "Farmer's dog, barking at a beggar."

On the surface of this chaos appeared its clergy, who shone amid the surrounding gloom, to use the idea of Bishop Taylor, "like rotten sticks in a dark night." The law professors had pretty nearly the same ascendancy and employ-

ment, as the stork among its subject frogs.

Its civic honours were an object of high consideration, and there appeared many anxious competitors for the possession of this ephemeral distinction. This feeling glowed with equal ardour in the bosoms of their females; the haughty consort of each successive magistrate being envied by the whole hive, and in every swarm considered as the queen bee.

There is in man a natural fondness for the office of a legislator; it appears in different modifications from the monarch who wields the sceptre of a realm, to the constable who authoritatively elevates his staff, the wooden head of which is scarcely less conscious than his own.

This feeling was perfectly understood in the Borough of ——, each paying implicit obedience to its head for the time being, and following, like bell-horses, wherever they were led by the tinkling of their leader's opinion. The ant in the allegory that carried the white straw, was

not obeyed with more promptitude, or observed with more deference.

This *magnificent* distinction was possessed in succession by some brainless artificer, some opulent manufacturer, who gave the best dinner, or some provincial Didius, who, by pecuniary assistance to the burghers, secured at once the applause and obedience of his petty empire, and enjoyed the gratification of a vanity scarcely less than that of Alexander, without being able, like him, to boast of his descent from the Thunderer.

These men were the proper tools of any candidate possessing ability, and even Lord Percival Lorn bent them to his purpose with as much facility as any one of them would have thrown the shuttle of his loom, or turned the pages of his ledger. The warp and woof of his political destiny was fabricated with ease by the fingers of superior intellect. It was but to let these people appear as actors, whilst himself arranged the crisis of the

drama. The dignitaries of a chess-board were not moved with more certainty.

It afforded an uninterested spectator an uncommon share of amusement, to observe how the notice of his lordship inflated into consequence the most insignificant of his constituents. The change of a tad-pole into a dragon-fly is not greater. They became, in fact, animals of a totally different species, as they imbibed inspiration at the cost of the candidate—talked of political consistency—discussed the conduct of public men, and the propriety of different measures,—bustled through the day with the self-complacency of the insect on the coach-box, and retired, at midnight, to snatch an hour of feverish repose, complaining of a pressure, scarcely less than that of Atlas.

Viewed through the medium of an election, a trifling mechanic or a half-witted manufacturer was magnified into a character of no common importance; he neglected his own affairs, with the

enthusiasm of a patriot, to join the committee, and make arrangements for the success of his favourite candidate. This transient comet, perchance of tallow or of turpentine, might be said to attain its perihelium in the heat of the contest; but the chairing day past, it sunk, at once, beneath its own insignificant horizon.

The committee-room or the hustings was the arena of his triumph; there, with all the dignity of a senator, he regulated the opening of pot-houses, distributed routes to the mounted madmen that brought up the voters, or scattered, with drunken profusion, the colours of his party. This was his *individual* employment in those intervals in which he was not called upon to contribute his quota, when the talents of the *whole* assembly were concentrated to a focus for the publication of a hand-bill. Then, even the voice of their candidate was drowned in the general clamour; had he even possessed the talents of Amphictyon

he could scarcely have reconciled the various opinions that were elicited by such a discussion: for the pertinacity with which each adhered to his own, and the dissonance that attended the avowal of the whole, might have ruffled the tranquillity of a Zeno, or exhausted the patience of a Job.

At the corner of every street, groups of electors were to be seen, blockading the avenues that led to the hustings and preventing the approach of voters, by these means materially injuring the very candidate, whom they were endeavouring to serve by the senseless clamour of vehement assertion, and empty argument. The persons of whom these groups were composed appeared rather caricatures of human nature than beings of man's lordly species: the prominent figure in most of them, was, generally, an attorney.

A certain degree of odium almost universally attaches to the professors of the law; the opportunities the profession affords of defrauding in a manner that is

felt, but cannot be publicly detected; the continual embracing of these opportunities by men, who would have disgraced any pursuit, and whose primary object in adopting this, was the almost unlimited exercise it affords to their fraudulent propensities, have sunk it to an abyss of infamy, from which even the efforts of the few men of honour whose practice might almost tempt one to discredit the evidence of one's senses, and to believe that *that* which may be applied to the noblest purposes can never be distorted to the vilest ends, have not been able to elevate it.

It were scarcely charity to say that in the Borough of——, *all* its lawyers were those very wretches who would promote discord for individual emolument, and sacrifice truth, principle, honesty, perhaps ability, on the polluted shrine of interest: but there *are* truths which the observer cannot but perceive, which the moralist dares not disavow.

These men, in their own inflated idea,

were as lions amongst bears, generals amongst soldiers, kings amongst courtiers, and in the committee-rooms, elevated to the dignity of the wool-sack. During the election, this self-importance was increased to a height that defies description. Opposing assertion to argument, law to common sense, as dogged as Diogenes, and possessing the reality of that stultidity which Junius Brutus only affected, they strode from street to street, imagining themselves Charons, who were to ferry their hero over into the Elysian fields of *parliament!*

In such a society, *every* stranger attracted a certain degree of notice, but, above all, he who had travelled and could regale their insatiable appetite for the marvellous: — to their ears, "'twas wonder all," and they entertained and caressed him, as a sort of hostage for the truth of what he had related.

In fact, *here* every novelty was encouraged, except such as might have improved them. Their dislike to useful

innovations proceeded from that same obstinate ignorance, which induced the French to drive from their country that identical John Law, to whom they owed their India Company and all they knew of commerce.

In short, here every folly was to be found, which is the natural product of a low contracted state of mind. A lecturer on Natural Philosophy, or the exhibitor of an orrery, had scarcely one auditor; whilst an itinerant companyof equestrians, or a wild-beast show, attracted all the RANK and FASHION of the place.

Its theatrical exhibitions were dictated by some "*Jack-pudding critic,*" in the shape of a Doctor or Lawyer; — by some bankrupt adventurer, whose credit having evaporated in the commercial world, had launched his fragile bark on the ocean of taste, and become an Admiral in the fleet of *vertù*, — or by some evergreen beauty, whose fading memory scarcely recollected the period when first she began to paint and patch her frontispiece,

in order to render it emblematic of her design.

Two or three such bubbles on the surface of this society, regulated the current of opinion; and these wooden levers elevated or depressed, at pleasure, the flood-gates of its censure or applause. The command of them was the point at which the candidate must aim; — and, had the attainment of this object cost even more than a ball or dinner, their price, *in specie*, was so small, that the neglect of securing them, would have reflected equally on his prudence and liberality. Lord Percival Lorn understood this, and, in truth, he bestowed these really trifling, but to himself most important favours, as liberally as Alexander distributed his magnificent gifts, previously to his embarkation for Persia. *Here*, indeed, there were but few Perdicas, who refused to accept any thing but a share in his labours and his hopes.

Fashion too, that *universal* idol, was worshipped at ——— by a *multitude* of

votaries; and every "*wasterill*" that Cambridge or Oxford had rejected, became as much an object of devotion, as the molten calf to the children of Israel.

The literature of the place, — if such, indeed, its reading could be called, partook of the same stupid inanity of idea: — the title of a book invariably regulated the choice of it, and "More Ghosts," or the "Midnight Hour," beat "the Rambler" or "the Spectator," with ease from the field.

Their teachers attracted their attention by bellowing something novel and *outrè*. Their theatrical cooks catered for their taste by producing rope-dancers and horses, dogs and asses, on the stage. If intellect *did* appear — if, by some chance, it *did* appear, like the sensitive exotic, trembling and drooping in a soil so ungenial, — it was soon compelled to check its ardent glow, to compromise its honours for its existence; and to regulate its indignant respiration, to suit the leaden dulness of the atmosphere. ———

The character of Lady Clervaux was remarkable for nothing but its vacillation; it was, therefore, the more wonderful that she persevered in the resolution of visiting Lady Jane Lorn on the morning of election. Perhaps the circumstance may be accounted for by recurring to that opposition the proposal experienced from Surrey; and contradiction alone had sufficient power to render Philippa firm in the execution of any project.

In effect, she arrived at Lord Percival's hotel, and was received by Lady Jane and her brother with the ten thousand welcomes she had anticipated.

"Well, Flash," said Lord Percival to his friend, during their walk to the county-hall, whence the members were to be exalted above the heads of their electors; "it is impossible for you to form any idea how I am annoyed with this bustle — absolutely impossible! Positively, the expense and trouble of getting a seat is a sufficient bore, without

suffering one's brains to be disturbed by public business, by listening to uninteresting debates, and that sort of thing."

"Ha, ha, ha! By my honour I don't imagine your lor'ship likely to be much occupied by public affairs next session, if you extend your route as far as you talk of doing. Saint Stephen's will be locked up, I've an idea, before you return from your trip into the North."

"My dear fellow, you surely cannot suppose, that I would curtail the ecstatic enjoyments of Scotland, even if by so doing I could secure the best sinecure under the crown, far less to be bored with debates and harangues, and that sort of nonsense; none of it of any value in the world, except to induce sleep after the weary vigil of a night spent in an infernal literary party. Now here's another bore — a list of services I have promised to render to my committee-men and voters. Such a string of excise promotion, midshipmen to be made lieutenants, and other plebeian preferments!

These fellows imagine that the interest of a member can achieve any thing; scarcely a man of them gives me his vote but modestly asks me to get him a post or stamp office for his services. If we manage the Receivership only, I shall think we do tolerably well, and that *must* be effected in some manner, notwithstanding the Duke's continual opposition to ministers. 'Pon my life, 'tis fortunate that honour is not like cash; if it were, I have expended so much in promises, and pledged it so often lately, that I see no possible remedy that could prevent my appearing in the gazette."

"No, no; performance is not so easy," said Mr. Flash, on their reaching the outskirts of the mob that surrounded the county-hall. "Address yourself, my lord, to Janus, the patron of parliament-men. Fear nothing but a brick-bat whilst you are chairing."

"'Pon my soul," returned Lord Percival, "that caution might be better addressed to Grosvenor. In *this* county,

who ever heard of the mob's attacking any candidate but the blue?"

The future member and his friend entered the hall. The necessary formalities passed without interruption. Lord Percival mounted into his chair, and was elevated to be the passing deity of the mob. Innumerable shoals of people followed him, and rent the heavens with their loud acclamations. His banners waved proudly in the air: he himself stood in an attitude that displayed his fine Herculean person to advantage. He bowed gracefully alike to friends and foes: perhaps, at this moment, all assumed the aspect of the former.

The "mockery of public show" was at length concluded; Lord Percival, with Captain Flash, entered the apartment, from the windows of which Lady Clervaux and Lady Jane had welcomed his approach.

"Well," said Lord Percival, seating himself, with a paper in his hand, and taking three or four glasses of sherry in very quick succession, "this speechify-

ing to the mob is a most infernal bore. The villainous rabble reach to the end of the street; I shall croak like a raven before I have done shouting to them: *n'importe* — it's a thing that must be done, and I believe, an harangue costs me as little as any man."

"That must, I presume, be attributed, in a great measure, to the modesty of your professions," said Lady Jane, smiling.

"Ha! ha! very good that, 'pon my soul; your la'ship knows me. An election is like a game at chess,—a few bold moves do the business."

"And *checque-mate* must be the most unpleasant part of it," said Lady Clervaux.

"Excellent, excellent, very true,— excessively so indeed," answered Lord Percival; "but come, the music pauses, and I must to the window."

His lordship glanced over the paper in his hand, for he greatly admired and

always followed the method that Pericles practised.

"Flash, my dear fellow," said he, laying it down on a sideboard, "you know your cue; give them your dose immediately after they have swallowed mine.—My dear ladies, from you I entreat *peace*."

Amid loud and continued cheers, Lord Percival approached the window, and leaning gracefully on both hands, as soon as silence could be restored, he began:—

"Gentlemen,

"Whilst the brilliant success of this day places me in the high situation of your representative in Parliament, it fills my mind with the most pleasing anticipation of the final triumph of our cause.

"Yes, Gentlemen, I feel that the cause of civil and religious liberty, independence, and good government, must ever maintain its ascendancy over that of tyranny and corruption. (*Loud cheering.*)

These are, I trust, feelings possessed in common by us all; but allow me to trespass upon your attention for a moment, whilst I endeavour to describe, however faintly, my individual sensations on this most flattering period of my life. —"

[Loud *hurras* interrupted the popular candidate; when the tumult had subsided, he resumed: —]

"Gentlemen, when I look upon the multitude of independent electors and valued friends that now surround me, and whose exertions for my interest have been indefatigable, I feel myself bound, as it were, by a tie of brotherhood to each of you; and I would it were possible I could descend from this situation, and fold to my grateful heart every individual who has honoured me with his suffrage! Beggar that I am, I am poor even in thanks!"

[Here a stifled laugh from within reached the ear of Lord Percival; he rapped with his foot against the floor

to enjoin silence; and the rabble, taking advantage of the momentary pause, rent the air with fresh acclamations. His lordship bowed, placed his hand upon his heart, and continued :]

"Gentlemen, whilst my conduct merits your thanks, can I want a motive to exertion? No, my friends; proud of your approbation, I shall be indefatigably strenuous in my exertions on your behalf. The consciousness of your support will be the impenetrable armour, by which I shall be enabled to meet, and animated to combat, every difficulty and danger. For myself I seek nothing, I desire nothing: all that an imperial diadem could bestow would be trifling in comparison with the satisfaction which I enjoy at this moment. [Loud cheers again interrupted him.]

"You have chosen me the champion of your rights; and if purity of intention and firmness of perseverance can ensure success, I feel that I shall go forth 'conquering and to conquer.' Of

this, at least, I will assure you: 'though a host shall encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.'

"I have little more to add. You already know my abhorrence of corruption in any shape, my anxiety for your local interests, my devotion to the public good, for which, like the Roman Curtius, I should be proud to sacrifice myself.

"Gentlemen, I again thank you. My heart is too full to allow me to say more; but of this be assured, that *there* the impression of your kindness is indelible, and that I shall carry with me to the grave that sentiment of affection for you which overpowers me at this moment."

Lord Percival passed his hand most gracefully over his brows, and, amid loud cheering, retired from the window.

"Upon my word, my lord," said Lady Clervaux, "I could have heard you for an hour. So excessively eloquent! Positively you are the British Demosthenes."

"Ha, ha! devilish good that! I remember that fellow used to speak with

French plums in his mouth. Pleasure to drink to your la'ship. Jane, my love to you. Don't you think I laid it on pretty thick?"

"Indeed I was terribly afraid you would overdo it," replied his sister.

"Ha! ha! Pretty simplicity from a girl who knows the world! No danger that way: nothing too gross for so mechanical a mob as that, take my word for it. I saw their mouths extend and discover long canine teeth, like the tusks of an elephant, at every pause. What a crew they were! The villainous rabble positively reached to the bottom of the street. I am as thirsty as a lime-kiln, from the heat. Well, after all that has been said of the streams of Helicon, I believe sherry is much more inspiring."

Hurra! again resounded from without.

"They are giving your lordship a parting cheer," said Lady Clervaux.

"No, no: your la'ship is not aware that my friend, the Reverend Mr. Flash,

has been giving me a flaming character from the end window. That, and a few well-tim'd puffs from the editor of the ——— ———, will do my business most completely. Flash, a famous good fellow, 'pon my soul; must just see how he gets on — perhaps wants a little prompting; — nobody so fit to assist him that way as myself: I know exactly what qualities he ought to praise: I know, too, tolerably well, of what kind of metal I am made; and, upon my soul, every fresh view I take of my own character excites a wish to our better acquaintance."

"Ha! ha!" said Lord Percival, returning from the elbow of his friend: "exactly as I had anticipated. Flash's harangue has produced so exquisite an effect, that the *canaille* are ready to render me the same homage, which Nebuchadnezzar enjoined to be paid to his golden idol. He is setting before them my brilliant qualities; contrasting my principles with those of their late represent-

ative, and drawing such a terrible picture of the evils that must have resulted from his continuing in Parliament, that the mob are moved even to sighs! Flash has worked himself up to something very like emotion: he even succeeded so far, during my visit to him, as to compel one solitary tear into his service, which trickled down the bridge of his nose, like a faithful Mussulman skating into Paradise across the bridge of Al Sirat. Ha! ha! ha! Never thought I should have derived so much amusement from this infernal bore. But, upon my honour, Jane, I had almost forgotten the most important and most grievous part of the business, positively.—The lustre of one of poor Flash's cærulean seats of vision is terribly obscured by its having come in contact with an annoying missile of some description. By the bye, this proves the *possible* veracity of the assertion of Tzetzes, that one of the eyes of the conqueror of Darius was black, the other blue. Positively one

cannot refuse credence to improbable facts, when they are thus attested by ocular demonstration. Ha! ha! Poor Flash must propitiate the Gods by sacrifices!"

"The *Gods of the gallery* by potations, I presume," said Lady Jane.

"Ha! ha! positively your la'ship has me! — exactly! — but here comes Flash himself; — I thank thee, my boy, for thy entire devotion to my cause, nevertheless I am perfectly aware that devotion costs thee as little as most men, 'for 'tis thy vocation, Sam, 'tis thy vocation!' always devout on a Sunday."

"*Devotion!*" said Mr. Flash in that languid tone of voice peculiar to him; — "oh, aye, true, devotion; exactly! devout every day in the week, but positively, Sunday must be excepted: on that day entirely out of the question. I get through prayers tolerably well, tolerably devout, as you have it, but when my curate mounts the rostrum — *vale!* — 'tis all over! — Surrounded by a

vast assemblage of the brightest eyes in the universe,—all collected round the desk actually;—what magnet attracts them, I really cannot, 'pon honour, say," pulling up his embroidered collar to his cheek-bones—"all looking infinite things at one—'pon my soul, sanctity and devotion melt under their gaze, as snow beneath a vertical sun, actually!"

"Don't read next Sunday then, Flash, you know," said Lord Percival, with an affectation of the *air piquante*.

"'Pon my soul, why, my lord?"

"Why, oh, as to that you know—are you not aware that—in short, you look confoundedly ugly, just now."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Mr. Flash, with vehemence; then in a subdued tone he added, "actually I do not comprehend."

"The thing is, as I said just now, your eyes are a second edition of Alexander's, as published by Tzetzes."

"'Pon honour, oh, yes, actually, I recollect exactly. Your lordship escaped

passablement bien," said Mr. Flash, adjusting his cravat with one hand, whilst the other held an elegant snuff-box to his nose.

"On the whole, perhaps, on the whole; but positively, Sir, one Hecate threatened me with a boiled potatoe, and another vile animal absolutely threw a pincushion at my head. It is certainly the mercy of heaven that I've escaped so well; never lost my dignity; firm as a rock, Sir, — the boy bit by the fox at Athens, —Sparta, I mean, — was nothing to me."

A servant at this moment entering, diverted the course of his lordship's ideas by stating, that a gentleman desired to see him on most urgent business.

"Some vile freeholder, I conjecture, presuming on having given me his vote! Go, fellow, tell him I come instantly. — This is insufferable; after having endured the horrors of canvassing, polling, chairing, is it not sufficient that the whole bore is to be wound up by a vulgar, heavy, corporation kind of dinner, but

must I be annoyed still by individual applications? — Go, Flash; see, is it some pampered divine — cry you mercy, Sam, — who asks a fellowship, a chaplainship, or a bishopric, for his '*unlicked college cub*' of a son — is it a hungry lawyer, who wants paying for having allayed disturbances he only fomented — is it a half-brained apothecary, demanding remuneration for the poisonous drugs with which he has drenched some poor fellow, who has been injured in my service, — or is it an overgrown manufacturer, who wishes to please '*madam and the young ladies,*' by getting himself knighted? — Settle him, whoever he is; promise the see of Canterbury — principal and interest twice told, — a coronet, — any thing — only rid me of him."

The Reverend Mr. Flash retreated; Lady Clervaux had listened to the fashionable candidate and the buck-parson with indescribable interest, ever and anon repeating to herself, "Lord! what a charming man is Lord Percival Lorn!"

His lordship adjusted his cravat and hair at a mirror ; — " D——d frightful looking-glass, this! Just step to it, Lady Clervaux ; gives a decent man a horrid appearance of age and ugliness. Jane, does my collar sit well ; fasten this brooch, will you? One must appear decent, even to those Vandal burghers. What can detain Flash so long? I must adjourn to the dining-room, or our provincials will be restive, skittish, perhaps gallop off another time : nay, don't go, my dear Lady Clervaux ; just hear what Flash has to say ; I will then have the pleasure of attending you to your carriage, and the misery of exchanging the fascinations of your ladyship, for the vulgarisms and *patois* of country 'squires, and overgrown mechanics."

After an absence of something less than half an hour, Mr. Flash returned.

" Ha! ha! ha!" said he, entering ; " excellent, most excellent! Two fair appellants to claim the decision of your lor'ship ; appear, my lord, as the ' *ar-*

biter elegantiarum:' give judgment in the case of Tweedle-dum *versus* Tweedle-dee! Ha! ha! ha! — Miss Griselda Primrose and the evergreen privet. The blooming Griselda will remind your lordship of those parti-coloured beauties, whom we so often see elevated to protect the demesnes of Pomona from winged depredators. Her opponent leaves unessayed at sixty, no means of appearing nineteen, and declares at last it's '*c—st provoking*' the world will not receive the conviction, although she herself is perfectly assured of it; notwithstanding each charm has vanished in as regular succession beneath the scythe of time, as did the progeny of Niobe, beneath the arrows of Apollo. — *Excusez*, my lord; I resume the subject. These brilliant planets were stuck in the window of the white house near the church, like the Giants at Guildhall. Your lordship scattering bows with the profusion of a Bolingbroke, one exquisitely fine and directed full at this honoured mansion, is claimed by each of these candidates as a

plumper ;— disputes run high : Griselda, with the pride of a Tarquin, turtles up, and asserts her claim as a personal friend and powerful supporter of your lor'ship ; her opponent appropriates it, as High Priestess of the temple of *Haut-ton.* So here comes a Mr. Jessamy, bowing and grinning like a MONKEY, to ask a verdict ; speak, my lord, give judgment like a Solomon."

"Ha ! ha ! ha ! — exquisite, by my laurels ! — In that case, I should order them to share the honour between them ; but, Flash, my boy, to tell you the truth I never saw either. The white house in the corner, you say ? — Ha ! — *à propòs,* I recollect, — my compliment was intended for a devilish pretty girl, whom I saw at the garret-window ; by the bye, do you inquire her out, Flash, will you ? — Ah ! — *pardonnez moi,* ladies : the fact is, my old housekeeper in London took her last slumber, a short time since, and is safely deposited in the vault of my ancestors. Her ghost is not quite so useful an animal as one could wish, so must certainly

replace her; and, positively, one may as well have a decent-looking sort of a being about one, as a Gorgon. So, Flash, just seek the girl out. My dear Lady Clervaux, you are preparing to go:—compliments to Sir Thomas, my colleague, and the rest of your party;—excessively glad the contest between us has terminated so amicably;—both of us understand the kind of thing very well, I dare say:—I purpose to have the honour of waiting on him speedily."

"And this Mr. Jessamy?" said Flash, enquiringly.

"Mr. Jessamy?—who the devil is he?"

"Employed in the case of Tweedle-dum *versus* Tweedle-dee."

"*Tweedle*—? oh, aye, I recollect;—tell the fellow 'twas for neither;—no, stop, d—n 'em, say for *both*."

Lord Percival handed Lady Clervaux to her carriage, who continually repeated to herself, during her ride, "Lord! what a charming man is Lord Percival Lorn!"

CHAP. VIII.

" This royal throne of Kings, this scepter'd isle,
This earth of Majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi Paradise:
This fortress built by nature for herself,
Against infection and the hand of war:
This precious stone, set in the silver sea,
This blessed plot — this earth — this realm —
this England!" —

" Mock not my senseless conjuration, lords.
This earth shall have a feeling, and these stones
Prove armed soldiers, ere her native King
Shall faulter under foul, rebellious arms."—
SHAKSPEARE.

" WHAT a multitude!" — said the Bishop to Lord Montague, observing the triumphal approach of Grosvenor, — " what a multitude! and each individual as anxious as if the success of the cause depended on his individual exertion! — It is with the current of events as with the billows of ocean, — those which are im-

mediately at hand, appear the most gigantic. What otherwise could account for the interest these people feel in an occurrence, which, in a very short period, will be forgotten entirely, or exist only on the pages of some obscure provincial journalist, headed with a scrap of Latin, as a proof of the Editor's erudition, and the emphasis of each speech printed in Italics,

'To teach the doubtful rabble where to clap.'

"Yet, such an event has, during its elapse, absorbed all their attention, and called forth all their energies: — each individual has espoused with enthusiastic violence the cause of a candidate, who, having been once tossed in that *Lethean chair*, forgets, at once, the devotion of his constituents, and regards the effervescence of their zeal only as an instance of their folly."

"Perhaps," returned Lord Montague, "there are few feelings so indistinctly defined as true and rational *loyalty*; yet there is scarcely a virtue, the possession of

which is more generally assumed. With what clamorous exertion these people exhibit what is only the semblance of it, or what proves its existence in a most degraded state, adulterated with party feeling — cramped by local or individual prejudices, or assumed as the mask of Faction. —

‘ Oh England, thou little body with a mighty heart,
‘ What might'st thou not achieve, if all thy sons
were true !"

"What indeed!" replied the Bishop. "True and rational loyalty is founded *on a heartfelt affection for the soil that gave us birth*, not on a fondness for the name of a King, not on a connection with any particular party, not on admiration of some popular minister, or a predilection for a certain colour, though each might become an object of regard, as the means of contributing to one great end, *the prosperity of our native land, and the happiness of that society in which Heaven has placed us.* Why is the true loyalist attached to his King and constitution?—

because history and the experience of ages has proved, that such a frame of things is most conducive to the maintenance of order, and the well-being of society; because he sees, that the British oak thrives best by such a mode of culture. *He* does not adopt any opinion as a rule of action merely because it was a watch-word from his cradle. *His* loyalty is the offspring of conviction, fostered by experience; though, as a man, he is liable to error, though he may still espouse the wrong side on many questions, the purity of his intentions is unshaken, and he demands respect as acting from principle. None but an unenlightened bigot will suppose truth confined to any sect or party; and the liberal mind is always willing to hope, that it is equally the aim of all.

"The loyalist is not the creature of any party; *as the guardian of his country*, he admires and supports her ministers; as the fountain of that government which diffuses blessings through society,

he loves and reveres his King. His loyalty is not confined to the sphere of his country's politics; he loves the upright minister of her religion, the enterprising merchant that extends her commerce; the man who elevates her character among nations by his genius, or defends it by his valour, becomes at once his friend. *He triumphs with his parent soil:* to repel the proud invader of it, he beats at once 'the ploughshare to the spear,' and fights for the freedom of his country; cheered, in the crash of battle, by the conviction, that if he falls, it is in the bed of honour; if he is victorious, he has, by the blessing of Heaven, freed his country from her danger.

"With such feelings, the rational loyalist is temperate and consistent: he opposes with ardour those designs which he deems hostile to his country's good; he supports those men whom he considers best calculated to advance the interests of the public weal; he would die for that King, who discharges, like a father, his

duty to his subjects. He defends those blessings which his country *feels*; for 'who shall harm that cedar under whose shade he is reposing?'—His opinions are not avowed with clamour, or propagated by violence; they are not to be made subservient to the elevation of a family, or to maintain the ascendancy of a colour: when *such* an end is all that the contending parties seek, during the contest he is a passive spectator: some greater cause of contention must tempt him into the arena. 'Give me Kings for my competitors, and I will enter the lists at Olympia,' said Alexander: the monarch *would* not compromise his dignity, by competing with a common wrestler.

"In short, it is the *prosperity of his native land*, that is the object of importance to the loyalist; and be it dependent on men or on systems, he is attached to *them* only as they are the means of advancing that end. *His* loyalty is of the heart, its action upon the life; not that

unmeaning profession, which is daily assumed by pretended reformers of the state, to cloak the malevolence of their designs, or lavished in the polluted eloquence of any ephemeral candidate for the public confidence, who aims solely at his own advancement. When the contest is closed, the loyalist buries with it any petty party animosity to which it had given rise; he is content to be an energetic opponent, without seeking the destruction of his adversary; he would rather gain a proselyte than immolate a victim. Each of his opponents is to him a countryman and a brother, and he would rather secure the peace of their common family by persuasion, than enforce it by coercion. This man is the rational, the enlightened, the christian loyalist."

"How widely different," said Lord Montague, "from the temporary enthusiast, whose passions are agitated by every trifling gust of party feeling! whose principles, it is to be feared,

exist only in the periodical exhibition of a ribband, which he elevates as the gauntlet of contention! Often, indeed, the better reason of such a character is so drowned in frequent libations to the idol of his worship, that it would be injustice to give to his assertions the title of *an opinion;* his support of the cause he assumes had, perhaps, its origin in some prospect of personal remuneration; he maintains it by outrage, and dignifies his violence by the name of LOYALTY,—as an act of rapine is palliated by being called the right of conquest! Led by interest, he becomes the tool of party; and with 'king and constitution' in his mouth, and the emblem of loyalty on his breast, he is engaged, like Esau, in the barter of his birth-right."

"I must confess," replied the Bishop, "that Grosvenor's election is a great satisfaction to me. I am not going to say, that I feel that violent emotion, which, at present, reigns in his own mind,—or, perhaps, in Miss Argyle's."

Miss Argyle smiled and blushed: Lord Montague observed that smile and that blush; he endeavoured to trace their probable source. "She *loves* Grosvenor!" he repeated to himself; he sighed, but he nevertheless listened with redoubled attention to the Bishop, who, scarcely noticing the change in the countenance of either, continued:—

"The views of an ecclesiastic point, or ought to point, to an end far superior to the gaining of a seat in Parliament. In a contest like this, he has no business to be actively engaged; he, who *is* actively engaged, can scarcely fail of enduring 'those envyings, those contentions, those heart-burnings, those vain-gloryings' that should never disturb that holy tranquillity of spirit, which ought to be the decided attribute of him whose function it is to be the voice of the invisible God, and who is thereby more nearly assimilated to the Eternal. But even *he* may be allowed to rejoice

in the triumph of virtue; more especially when that triumph may be a means of promoting the welfare of thousands. Grosvenor had to encounter innumerable difficulties; his friends displayed them fairly to him, but he persisted in regarding them as mere trifles, that ought not, for a moment, to be considered of importance sufficient to obstruct the attainment of that end at which he aimed."

"I *respect* Mr. Grosvenor," said Lord Montague warmly, "for the elevation of mind such conduct pourtrays. For I observe continually, that it is the peculiar province of a little mind to anticipate every difficulty that can *possibly* attend an enterprise, and to examine with suspicious care the structure of every mole-hill in its path; whilst the mental eye of genius surveys mountains of difficulty with delight, proudly conscious of possessing that energy which must ultimately surmount them. I hope always to be preserved from the sphere of that man

whose pleasure consists in a continual reference to the misfortunes of others, who considers life but as one extended almanack of misfortune, and who, on receiving the slightest hint of your intention, can present to your view every contingency that is likely to obstruct its progress or baffle its completion. *His* is invariably the darkest view of every question, and he brands any other as visionary and enthusiastic. Reason appeals to such a man in vain; and to endeavour to convey to him an adequate idea of the capabilities of superior intellect, would be a task as hopeless as labouring to impress the mind of an inhabitant of the polar regions, with ideas of the splendid scenery and cloudless sunshine of the tropics."

"And is not genius, my dear lord, too apt to over-rate its powers, and to presume on the achievement of that which is impossible? For, may not he, who has 'fought through opposing hosts,' come forth so wounded from the con-

flict, that success is misery; or so exhausted, that he may exclaim with the Carthaginian of old, '*another such a* victory, and I am undone.'"

"He who has past his life in the study of man, must bow in perfect, though perhaps painful acquiescence, to the truth of your lordship's observation," returned Lord Montague, in a voice, the tone of which nothing but the conviction resulting from experience could so impress.

"How different," thought Miss Argyle, "was the glow of manner in which he spoke of Grosvenor, to the pensive indifference with which he replied to the Bishop!" She was not aware of the *double* motive that influenced him in the former case; she could comprehend that species of satisfaction which every friend of mankind, in a collective sense, derives from the discovery of excellence *in* man; but she did not know that Lord Montague expressed his approbation of Grosvenor, individually, the more strongly, because he suspected her par-

tiality to him, and because he had, perhaps unconsciously, adopted as a motto, that must invariably regulate his conduct to herself, the celebrated answer of Alexander to those friends who advised him to attack Darius in the night, "*I will not* STEAL *a victory!*"

"*Mort de ma vie!*" said Surrey entering, his countenance so heated that it almost seemed to breathe flames, "*quelle canaille!* — Bob Newport's chairing nothing to it, positively nothing! 'The rabble hooted, and clapped their chapt hands, and threw up their sweaty nightcaps, and uttered such a deal of stinking breath, because Cæsar was chaired,' that if it 'had not almost choaked Cæsar,' it had almost choaked Cæsar's Antony: 'for mine own part, I durst not laugh, for fear of opening my lips, and receiving the bad air.' One bore of a fellow caught my arm, and at the imminent peril of both our lives dragged me aside, to bid me have a care that nothing was spoken by Grosvenor in the way of a

personal reflection: I was confoundedly inclined to level the fellow with the earth; but then I recollected, how should this plebeian understand the regulations which a gentleman feels himself bound to observe? so I even constrained myself to listen to him patiently; 'you must know,' said he, 'that, at the election for the Borough, one of the candidates said something that the other did not like, and the consequence was, a *challenge!*'—'The devil!' said I, 'why what a Greenhorn the fellow must be to notice an electioneering speech;—manufacturer, or something of that kind, of course.'—'Not far off the mark,' says he; 'but the *challenge*, think of that, Master Brook!' Now, do you know, Miss Argyle, I thought that confoundedly free in the fellow, and so I determined to fight shy; but he continued to pester me with his nonsense and his Borough-members, and their meeting, and the measuring of the

ground, and the priming of the pistols, — and then the parties themselves standing together, looking fierce and all that, like a Harlequin and Pantaloon, so turning the farce into a pantomime—*enfin, tel diable d'histoire,* that nothing can give you an idea how it *ennuied* me!"

"Your repetition of it, perhaps," said Miss Argyle quietly.

"Hey? how?—Well, no matter: I wish you could have been in the midst of the mob, as I was, just to have got an idea of the thing. But Lord Percival mustered three times our force, I imagine; — all the blackguards in the country; for *who* were his constituents?

'As abject, crouching, vile, and void a train,
As wit could well deride, or worth disdain.'

Lady Jane's influence decidedly conquered for him. What the devil the people can see in that unwieldy being, I can't, for the soul of me, imagine."

"That Lady Jane Lorn has so many *adherents,* is certainly no object of sur-

prise," said Miss Argyle; "for we know, by the great law of gravitation, that the attraction of all bodies is in proportion to the quantity of matter which they contain."

Perhaps the world did not contain a person more keenly susceptible of wit than Lord Montague. The perspicuity with which Miss Argyle combined images, in themselves apparently so remote, the eagle-glance that discovered instantly what resemblance really existed, the suddenness and acuteness of her perceptions, the brilliancy of her ideas, and the scarcely less brilliant manner in which they were uttered, were powerful fascinations in the eye of him who appreciated justly; — of him who, having made MAN the great volume of instruction, knew the power of wit in elucidating the obscurities of that volume. For they, who wish to study MAN, are wrong in carrying with them into society a countenance expressive of deep observation. People are uncomfortable in the society

of a person of acknowledged abilities, who is grave and taciturn: they *feel* themselves the objects of his observation, and, carefully concealing their real character, they appear in a false semblance. If the observer of human nature possess *wit*, let him be most playful when he searches most deeply. *Wit* is the great key to the human mind: its effects are so exhilarating, that all reserve disappears before its influence; it lays open the hearts of the human race, and the most carefully-concealed traits of character are at the mercy of him, who possesses it. He, who thinks, should appear as one who thinks not.

"Lady Jane Lorn, notwithstanding the disadvantages of her person, is said to be a most fascinating being," observed Lady Anne de Burgh: "the originality of her manner is, perhaps, her greatest charm."

"What *is* originality, my dear Lady Anne?" said Miss Argyle: "surely not the discarding of every feminine attribute — the total neglect of every decorum

that has become a sexual characteristic; not the adopting of the rough language of a groom, in place of the decorous periods that ought to grace a female mouth; not the affectation of boisterous health both of mind and body; not the imitating of every *graciosa* who exhibits in a new character to overflowing houses; not the substituting of whim for acquirements: in short, the diametrical opposite to propriety and grace is *not* originality. An author might as well lay claim to it, by reversing the story of Cervantes, and making the windmill attack Don Quixote."

"You are right, my dear Miss Argyle," said Lady Anne affectionately: "I acknowledge the inconsideration with which I spoke; or, rather, I avow that I have not dared to think for myself as you have done. I have *adopted* a *current* opinion, not *formed* an *original* one."

How graceful, how subduing, is this yielding spirit in woman! She who has it not may attract — may captivate; she

may enslave the fancy of man, but she cannot touch his heart.

Grosvenor, having finished his address to his constituents, had entered whilst Miss Argyle spoke. He admired the independence of character that had enabled her to resist the torrent of public opinion, which so forcibly impelled others; but Lady Anne had quickened the pulsation of his heart, and imparted increased brilliancy to those eyes which were now most tenderly regarding her.

Lady Anne looked up. She caught the glance: her cheek glowed under its beam; one sparkling ray of delight swept over her countenance; the next moment it exhibited the stamp of full and newly-found happiness.

Lady Clervaux entered. She descanted with great animation on the delight she had enjoyed in the society of Lord Percival and Lady Jane Lorn, and concluded by felicitating herself and those around her, on the promised visit of the brother and sister.

"As to you, Grosvenor," she concluded, "I quite envy you. As the colleague of Lord Percival, you will, of necessity, enjoy much of his society. Oh, what a charming man is Lord Percival Lorn!"

"He is dissipated, a gamester, unprincipled. I shall not endure him," said Grosvenor.

"Guard yourself from him, as from the adder that would twine around you. I *know* the man," said Lord Montague.

Grosvenor was grateful that this extraordinary being thus warmly interested himself for *him*. "To be the *friend* of that man!" thought he. Grosvenor's proud heart bounded at the possibility, and Lord Percival Lorn sunk, in the comparison, to the abject thing he really was.

CHAP. IX.

"Could great men thunder
As Jove himself does, Jove would ne'er be quiet;
For every pelting, petty officer
Would use his heaven for thunder."

SHAKSPEARE.

"Dost know this water-fly, Horatio?"

SHAKSPEARE.

"Does any great man glunch an' gloom,
Speak out an' never fash your thumb,
Let posts an' pensions sink or soom,
Wi' them wha grant 'em;
If honestly they canna come,
Far better want 'em.

"In gathering votes you were na slack,
Now stand as tightly by your tack,
Ne'er claw your lug an' fidge your back,
An' hum an' haw;
But raise your arm, an' tell your crack,
Before them a'."

BURNS.

"FOREWARN'D, forearm'd!" says the proverb; or, if indeed it *be* not a proverb, it is a remark, the justice and universal ap-

plicability of which, have given it the generality of one.

Grosvenor had prepared himself to despise and to shun Lord Percival Lorn; convinced that the warning of Lord Montague, and his own knowledge of his colleague's character, would each be a shield, presenting an adamantine safe-guard to the attacking intimacy at which, it might be expected, Lord Percival would aim.

It is not the conviction that we possess power and energy to repel danger, that will ensure victory. Conquest will rather be the reward of him who, by reflecting that there is a *possibility* of failure, calls into action every possible resource against defeat.

At the juncture of Grosvenor's election, the vessel of government was steered by a man of stupendous talents, and mighty energy of character; capable of projecting the strongest measures, and decided in their execution. Add to these advantages, that, in a question

involving many major interests, perhaps the vital interests of the realm, — a question that had been discussed with the deepest attention — that had called forth all the concentrated talents of the kingdom, — a question that had roused every faculty in the people, who hung with almost breathless anxiety on the final determination of it, — the minister had spoken with a blaze of eloquence which, while it astonished Europe, had rendered him the popular idol.

To crush this man, to overwhelm him by a force so stupendous, that, in the probable nature of things, he could never rebound from the pressure, had been the aim of a faction, at the head of which was the Duke of ———. Though its meetings, its correspondence, and its arrangements were directed with inquisitorial secresy, though its subtleties had penetrated into the very heart of the minister's cabinet, it had yet failed. The premier directed the springs of machines, the mechanism of which was

too complicated, the conduct too laborious, for men of merely tolerable abilities to affect. His gigantic powers, his mighty energies, could alone, at this important crisis, steer the vessel safe through a narrow sea, surrounded by rocks and quicksands, on which it might have struck, even if the helmsman had slumbered but for a moment. There were "wheels within wheels," the intricacies of which he alone could comprehend, and which, in several minute shapes, had warned him of the cabal that was formed against him. Once apprised of the danger, he saw the prospect of extended labours like those of Hercules, and felt himself endowed with a vigour equal to the occasion. His success declared the superiority of his stupendous genius. His enemies shrunk alarmed, but not annihilated. Their discomfiture placed him more firmly in his seat, and rendered his pre-eminence more determined, more conspicuous than ever.

All hopes of overwhelming him by

one mighty blow were, however unwillingly, of necessity resigned. Of slow but ultimate success, the cabal still entertained confident expectations. Of whatever value might be their influence in the system, it was invariably retrograde. Totally regardless of that "public weal or woe" on which they harangued so loudly, animated solely by private motives of personal enmity, envy, or hopes of individual aggrandisement, they pursued that train of minute *plotting* which appears, in its rise and imperceptible progress, so contemptible, but which, in fact, bears a strong resemblance to that which is said to be the most exquisite of all tortures, the continual falling of a single drop of water on the head of the criminal.

Parliament was dissolved. The minister still retained his popularity, and the cabal their determined resolution to effect his ruin.

But the Duke of ——— had another end to obtain in the earnestness with

which he prosecuted his plans. It was not the success of a *party* for which he strove; it was not for the downfall of the *man*: it was for the attainment of that station for himself, which was now *occupied* by the minister.

To effect that which must be the first moiety towards the attainment of his ultimate object, he had associated himself with the cabal. All equally intent on plucking the minister from his proud pre-eminence, no discord disturbed the harmony of their measures, or threatened the destruction of their plans. So far, they were the useful tools, the necessary drudges of their master. To arrive at his *ultimatum*, the Duke had formed another, and a yet more private faction, the knowledge of which was confined to himself, his brother Lord Percival, and their sister, Lady Jane Lorn.

However independent may be the principles with which a man enters parliament, it is a well-ascertained fact, that he may frequently be induced to vote in

a manner which he had not previously intended. Hurried away by the impulse of the moment, by the impetus of specious sentiments, clad in the most brilliant garb of rhetoric, and delivered with an eloquence of voice and gesture more powerful than is generally conceived, the agitation of his feelings absorbs the quiet voice of his reason, and he does wrong when he is most anxious to be right.

Versed in the arts of chicanery, from the capacious exercise of them at the *summit* of society, to the minute gradations that are within the grasp of the petty law-professor, the Duke of ——— was aware how necessary it was to the success of his measures, that Lord Percival Lorn should be returned a member for the county of ———. Not that Lord Percival had talents of that dangerous kind spoken of just now, but, by a system which experience has proved to be feasible, he assumed the semblance of them, and produced most of the effects of the reality.

Lady Jane's talents had received every cultivation which a diplomatic uncle, whom she had accompanied on several embassies, could bestow. By his desire she had written speeches on every important question that came before the house, which he had enriched with that technical jargon that is, at once, necessary and ridiculous. Habit had perfected that for which nature had given capacity. She returned from the mansion of the diplomatist, on his death, to preside over the establishment of her brother, the Duke; a treasure of which he was the possessor, without being conscious of the political importance of it. But her ladyship did not suffer her consequence to remain unsuspected. She produced and re-produced written testimonials to combat the infidelity of his Grace; for, to deny the talents of woman, formed a major portion of his creed, and to ridicule her inconsistencies, an inexhaustible fund to draw on for that raillery which he dignified with the name of wit.

Lord Percival Lorn possessed those natural requisites in the forming of a good Orator, a powerful and melodious voice, smoothness and clearness of enunciation, graceful gesture, and the *recommendatory* superfluity of a fine person, and an animated, if not an intelligent countenance. The union of Lady Jane's talents and of Lord Percival's powers of *exerting* them, might be made too useful to allow the Duke's neglect of them. It became then the daily task of the one to write the most brilliant speeches on subjects that would probably be submitted to the discussion of the House; and of the other, to deliver them. The experiment was repeated and reiterated; its success exceeded expectation; and Lord Percival and Lady Jane came down to —— empowered to stand the most severe contest, and not to *flinch* whilst the feeblest spark of hope appeared, as a beacon to their path.

The world had given Henry Wharton Grosvenor credit for the concentration

of those talents, which Lord Percival and Lady Jane Lorn divided. The Duke feared an opponent that might become so dangerously powerful; and anxiously wished to gain a supporter whose influence might become, in time, extended beyond present calculation. Grosvenor's character was carefully gathered from minute anecdotes, and apparently indefinite traits; but it is a combination of such traits that form or govern the whole. The result of his Grace's observations was communicated to the brother and sister, as firmly united by ambition, as others by fraternal affection; and they were directed to take their measures accordingly.

Grosvenor received Lord Percival Lorn and Lady Jane with a determination never to overstep the circle of frigid politeness which he had drawn around him.

His resolution remained firm for the first half hour; to resist the wit, good-humour, frankness, and courtesy of

Lord Percival, for a longer period was impossible. Grosvenor resumed his wonted *enjouissance* of manner; he was even disposed to regard his colleague with the more cordiality, because he imagined he had been unjust and premature in the condemnation of a man whose character he had been contented to condemn on report. Grosvenor forgot that it was on the report of *Lord Montague!*—but a generous mind always is eager to compensate by more unlimited confidence, the man whom it fancies it has injured by ungenerous and unwarrantable suspicion.

If the character of Lord Percival Lorn had been estimated by the sentiments and the information he displayed during this interview, the portrait would have been a very false resemblance, if drawn by a man more conversant with the world and with the intricacies of the political school than Grosvenor, or less so than Lord Montague. It may constantly be seen now, in the intercourse of society,

very weak minds often acquire a sort of tinsel-brilliancy; they are enabled to appropriate to themselves a certain portion of that information, which floats loose, as it were, on the surface of the literary and philosophic world. Such a character, like a judicious card-player, is constantly endeavouring to gain the lead in favour of his own hand. He collects with assiduous care, those remarks that have commanded attention in any former conversation, or those flashes of wit, which have elicited applause in another circle. He interweaves them dexterously into the subject on which he is speaking; they are again applauded; possibly his auditors are amused or enlightened! ignorant that what appears to them a fresh view of the subject, or an original remark, has, in fact, been often repeated, and is again carefully treasured up for another exhibition.

The Reverend Mr. Flash was astonished at the *sense* of his noble friend's remarks; — "Bravo, Percy!" said he to

himself; — "what the deuce inspires thee now? — may I be bored if I don't think talking sense will come into fashion; — how d—'d unfashionable I *shall* be!" — let it be remembered that Mr. Flash was exceedingly careful to *say this only to himself.*

Lord Montague sat in silent and apparently abstracted attention; but he was, in reality, attentively observing Lord Percival and Mr. Grosvenor; — he comprehended the former; — he knew sufficient of the waves that were, at present, disturbing the sea of politics, to be aware how desirable an adherent Grosvenor would be to the opposition benches; he was no stranger to the subtle and mazy mind of the Duke: — he trembled for the fate of a promising young man, — of a nephew of the Bishop, — of the lover of Miss Argyle. He sighed, — and he placed that sigh to the account of the misery that would crush the proud mind of Miss Argyle, on the delinquency of

the man to whose fate her own was bound! —

The Bishop himself was not less attentively observing Miss Argyle and Lady Jane Lorn.

"Upon my soul," said her ladyship, "Percy and I have stood a famous contest; — I was terribly afraid at the close of the first day's poll, that we must have backed; — Sir Vicary beat us hollow then, and I thought of decamping, that I might not be in at the death: — I was heartily glad to hear how they *queered* the old fellow; — by my faith, I never saw so disagreeable a brute as that nephew of his, —all his soul narrowed to a point, and every idea stuck indiscriminately on the end of it, and produced on every occasion."

"It will always appear to me," said Miss Wodehouse, whose mincing voice, and *fineness* of manner, forcibly contrasted Lady Jane's careless, and not disagreeable *brusquerie*; "it will always appear to me, that common-sense is by far, is

incalculably the most valuable species of sense. From what I hear and what I observe, I incline to think, that a failure in that lost Sir Vicary Villars his election."

"Not only a failure in common-sense, but in sense of every kind," said Miss Argyle; — "and, in truth, this constant preference of common-sense to learned sense, elegant sense, or scientific sense, appears to me to be a preference of pence to guineas, because the former may be given to every mechanic, and the latter can be, with propriety, offered to none but those, from whom you may reasonably expect change."

Miss Wodehouse coloured and bit her lip, — mortified but not convinced.

"Let us see what is the depth of this child, before whom these haughty spirits all seem to quail," thought Lady Jane, and discarding her former boisterous but not vulgar manner with as much ease as a lady of *haut ton* throws off her *roquelaure*, and displays all the elegance and

splendour of fashion, she touched on several subjects not usually considered within the sphere of female attainment, with that Parisian *persiflage*, which she had acquired to perfection during her long residence at foreign courts; continually throwing out a plummet to ascertain the depth of Miss Argyle's understanding, whilst she appeared flourishing a whip merely for her own amusement, or for the pleasure of hearing it crack.

But Miss Argyle was superior to Lady Jane in every thing but knowledge of the world. Lady Jane had a good deal of moral *tact*, but Miss Argyle was capable of the moral sublime. Lady Jane could speak on all subjects with apparent knowledge; but Miss Argyle's ideas were dictated by real and obvious science. It is a question whether a *strong* mind, and a mind capable of expansion, are always identified: if they are not, Lady Jane's was to be characterised under the latter class. Miss Argyle indisputably possessed both. If Lady Jane excelled

in the happy flow of her language, and the nice arrangement of her sentences, Miss Argyle had an attribute which decidedly eclipsed, and frequently prevented the play of this attractive quality in Lady Jane. It was strength and rapidity of idea, communicating its influence to her manner, and thus rendering it irresistibly forcible and fascinating. In short, the distinction between the two cannot be better expressed than by those appellatives used formerly to distinguish sects of religious controversialists. The one was a *nominalist*, the other a *realist*.

Miss Argyle quickly estimated Lady Jane's powers. She saw that her opponent — for, though apparently engaged in amicable discussion, Miss Argyle comprehended that Lady Jane had commenced a trial of strength, a contest for mental superiority — was now glad to fall back adroitly, and to effect a retreat before the victory was finally determined against her.

Lady Jane justly considered all those

who now surrounded Grosvenor as persons most interested for his real welfare, and, consequently, most likely to obstruct the views of her family. To comprehend them all was a task which, of necessity, devolved on her. Miss Argyle was above her own level, and Lady Jane was obliged to content herself with hoping that it was not to her that Grosvenor was engaged; for a report of his engagements to somebody, the *how* and the *to whom* unknown, had spread widely. Miss Wodehouse was too contemptible to be thought of; Lady Anne de Burgh's noble simplicity of chrracter, now under the powerful influence of Miss Argyle's example, delicate remonstrances, and affectionate friendship, losing that pride which had nearly been its bane, appeared to the mistaken view of the cautiously-calculating woman of the world, *unformedness of character*, if such an expression be intelligible. Lady Anne seemed a woman whose most dangerous qualification was her beauty, a power which, of all others,

it had, through life, been Lady Jane Lorn's successful aim to counteract. So much for those ladies of the party with whom her acquaintance had this day commenced.

On the influence of the females either for or against the plans of her family, Lady Jane did not calculate largely. She knew that, as no ties of affinity bound Grosvenor to any one of them, he would soon be emancipated from their immediate sphere. And when once that emancipation had taken place, what could not Lady Jane Lorn's powers effect?

To the male friends of Grosvenor, she now directed her attention. The Bishop of ——— was not present; he had retired to make some arrangements previously to his departure on the morrow from Mr. Walworth's mansion; Lady Jane had heard of this kinsman of Grosvenor; she did not regret his escape from her intended scrutiny, or rejoice in his being obliged to return to his own

see at this important crisis, as she would have done if his character had been known to her. But the dignitaries of her acquaintance and of her own family were men of selfish and contracted views, with minds cultivated just sufficiently with the drudgery of Greek and Latin to enable them to obtain a degree. That ordeal past, they had been pushed up by the interest of connections, and now were contented to be very orthodox in their opinions, very cautious of *ennuying* their respective flocks with more than four sermons of their own during the year, and very anxious to have the best tables and the best cooks in the British dominions.

And Lady Jane had imagined *our* Bishop a man to be classed with things that "to-day are, and to-morrow are not!" Mistaken narrowness of mind, to conclude that because one part of a whole sins, another part, having the same opportunities, must sin also! that

because one member is diseased, the whole body must be corrupt!

There was, then, Lord Montague — and he called all Lady Jane's powers into action, and defied the whole force of her penetration.

As if conscious of her intentions, his countenance exhibited all that immoveableness, that expression which was evidently not induced by his thoughts, not frigid, not sullen, not vacant, not unsocial, not haughty, but yet unindicative of aught that past within. Always imposing, always grand, he was so completely masked, and so well masked, that Lady Jane was unable to pronounce decidedly on one trait of his character, whether he were likely to obstruct her designs or to advance them; what were his views and aims, if any; whether he was a person greatly to be dreaded, or fearlessly to be passed over. She recurred to the attack again and again, always returning from it disappointed and dissatisfied, wishing to believe there was

every thing to hope, but compelled to listen to the whispers of fear: she examined and compared, laid down false premises and drew false conclusions, unconscious that all this time her own mind had been completely laid open to the view of Lord Montague; that not a half-formed thought had crossed it of which he was not perfectly aware; and that her motives, her secret, her powerful, her extended motives, were suspected, almost developed by him.

Lady Jane retired, for a moment, within herself, baffled and disappointed, uncertain whether she had seen the real man, or an assumed character, adopted by a powerful mind to suit a particular moment, and to meet a particular occasion.

"Consummate hypocrite, or consummate fool? which?" thought Lady Jane; and she recurred to the question again and again, unable, at last, to decide. How nice must be the lines that separate extreme folly from extreme wisdom, when

a woman of Lady Jane Lorn's penetration was unable to determine which was the characteristic that distinguished this one individual!

Lord Montague had appeared in an *unusual* semblance, but not a *false* one; the manner he had assumed during this interview was his own,—deprived only of all those tints that generally softened and improved it. The strongest, the most affecting emotions that agitated his mind, had alone the power of communicating themselves to his countenance;—at other times it was entirely under his own control, when he chose to exercise that control;—generally, talent, feeling, sublimity, magnificence of thought, every thing that formed his character shone there, so combined in one radiance, that none but the acutest eye could define the parts, as the swift succession of prismatic colours produces a colourless amalgama.

And now, Lord Percival Lorn devoting himself to Mr. Walworth and Sir

Thomas Clervaux, afforded his sister an opportunity of devoting *herself* to Mr. Grosvenor.

And she drew out Mr. Grosvenor so completely by her skilful management, and consummate address, that nothing, as far as character only was concerned, remained for her to discover. She saw that the world had given him credit for no talent, noble sentiment, or capacity of mind, which he did not possess. But there *were* traits, which promised well to Lady Jane, which her eagle-eye readily discovered, by which her eagle spirit was to pounce upon her prey, and retain him.

Lady Jane had examined, as carefully as possible, the character of Grosvenor himself, and of all those that surrounded him, of sufficient importance to excite either her hope or her fear:—in this number Surrey was not included, for he appeared to Lady Jane in the light of one of those characters that are introduced in serious drama, to relieve, at

intervals, the powerful impression the more important personages have produced. She was, therefore, the less impatient of the intrusion of some of the constituents of both members, who came to remind them of promises — or rather to remind Lord Percival Lorn, for Grosvenor would promise nothing — and to invite them to their villas: — for it was not forgotten by those who had families and large fortunes without gentility, that neither Lord Percival Lorn nor Mr. Grosvenor were married.

Lady Jane listened in smiling attention to the animated encomiums each of these men bestowed on the prospect that might be viewed from his breakfast-room windows; and whilst Miss Argyle sat in cold and almost haughty silence, Lady Jane's vivacity was unbounded; and she contrived, by her Proteus-like condescension, to inspire each individual with the idea that she distinguished *him* by peculiar complaisance, and admired that land-

scape only, which adorned *his* particular dwelling!

—— "You remember Lord Percival," said Lady Jane, when the unwelcome visitors had departed; — "you remember being introduced to two scraggy-looking sisters at the house of the Sir John Falstaff sort of man, who has just left us. One of them was offended, you know, by Mr. Flash' saying rather too loud, that she saw both sides of the question at once; and we heard afterwards that the younger, whose tongue illustrated the doctrine of perpetual motion, had talked herself into a fever! — One of these divinities, I have gathered from the conversation of Sir John, is prepared to take you captive! — so *preparez vous, mon frère;* — you will allow that the enemy's forces are numerous!" —

"Strike me inelegant, if that is not devilish good," said Surrey, *jumping* across the room, and throwing himself on the ottoman by the side of Lady Jane! "The enemy's forces are numerous!

certainly! eyes as aforesaid; nose *plus qu'a la Roxalane;* mouth like the gap in the post-box; contour of person wanting! great forces, really! I remember, Lady Jane, about three years since, at Bob Newport's election, *I* was placed in a similar situation; girls so devilish fond of flirting, that they *ennuye* a man to death! one of the freeholders had a vast fancy for a well-descended son-in-law, and Bob Newport so d—'d shy, that, in fact, always overlooked; so *I* was the butt at which their arrows were aimed; and sorely they wounded me, as your ladyship may imagine!"

"Just the way of these freeholders, Surrey," said Sir Thomas Clervaux. "*I* very narrowly escaped the snares they spread for me formerly; *now*, indeed, *c'est une autre chose.*"

"I do not, indeed, understand the necessity of your referring to any thing so horridly vulgar, Sir Thomas," said Lady Clervaux, interrupting him; *she*

was, in turn, interrupted by Surrey, who exclaimed, laughing loudly, —

"Lady Clervaux commander-in-chief! ha! ha! ha! d—'d good, quiz me if it is not!"

"If, as Shakspeare says," replied Lady Jane, with an accent that partook at once of sarcasm and *badinage*, "if the state of man may be likened unto a little kingdom, this petty empire must indeed be in the last extremity to need a perpetual dictator!"

Surrey laughed loudly; Lord Percival swore elegantly; Lady Clervaux bit her lip; Sir Thomas smiled on Lady Jane; and Miss Wodehouse looked just as she did before.

"I really should like to know," said Lady Clervaux, "whether any advantage of a pecuniary nature is to be derived from a seat in parliament, as one sees so many striving for the distinction; or whether it is merely a dignity conferred by the people, analogous to the petty

honour of knighthood bestowed by the sovereign?"

"Why, in fact," replied Lord Percival, "your ladyship must be aware that much may be said on this subject. In the first place we must remember, that the value of any opportunity must be estimated by the power he to whom it occurs has of availing himself of it. The immediate pecuniary advantages of a seat in the house are but trifling, and to a man of fortune contemptible; but to the possessor of talents, eloquence, and ambition, it offers every thing. It is the *high road* to preferment, and much more secure, much nearer to the goal, than those *bye-ways*, by which *they* must travel who have not these qualifications. Every one notices the trifling privilege of *franking letters;* but it is to merchants only that this can be a valuable consideration."

This information conferred on the attentive Surrey, pretty nearly the same service, that Saint Paul received from

Ananias at Damascus. Unfortunately, he had it not in his power to make so good an use of it. But desirous of attracting attention to himself, he suddenly began to sing in a manner that afforded play for all the rich tones of his uncommonly fine and powerful voice,—

"Above thunder and tempest Britannia was placed
On the rocks of her sea-begirt isle ;
Her brow with the trophies of conquest was graced,
And she viewed the wide world with a smile.

"While nobly the winds gave her ensign to wave,
In heaven's clear æther unfurled,
Shone its motto emblazoned, '*We conquer to save;*'
And, '*Britain against the whole world!*'

"She saw heroes and kings, from each far distant land,
Rally round the bright standard she reared ;
While exulting they mixed with her own warlike band ;
And her name through the earth was revered."

Surrey was rapturously applauded ; and he deserved applause ; for the strength, clearness, and melody of his voice, and the accuracy of his ear, had never been surpassed.

"Oh, is not Lord Percival Lorn a charming man?" said Lady Clervaux, after the departure of the brother and sister.

"A man of good sense, and of an elegant, classic arrangement of words," said the *verbal* Miss Wodehouse.

"It is, perhaps, irrational to admit an instant prejudice," said Lady Anne de Burgh, "but I confess I do not like Lord Percival. His wit is doubtless amusing, but not brilliant."

"It is *not* irrational, my dear Lady Anne," said Miss Argyle; "and you think it so, only because you hesitate to avow to yourself, that beneath Lord Percival's wit, you have discovered his shallowness of mind, his hollowness of character. His *wit?* yes, it *is* wit; but it is like the water in our cisterns; it had already passed through every atmospheric change, and was precipitated purely from its specific gravity into the hands of its present possessor. *Wit?*

yes, doubtless, if wit can characterise a man who has not one original idea, or sufficient knowledge of any one science to draw an idea from it."

"Prejudice, my dear Miss Argyle, all prejudice, believe me!" said Grosvenor, warmly; "I am ashamed of all my former doubts, my former contempt, of Lord Percival Lorn. His appearing, perhaps, in the late contest, as the rival of your friend, a title by which I am proud to distinguish myself, has left on your mind an impression to his disadvantage."

"Harry Grosvenor, how is this?" said Miss Argyle, in astonishment; "have you had greater opportunity of observing Lord Percival, — have you made more use of that opportunity, — or have you been more interested to observe him than I? And do you suppose that individual attachment, or personal friendship, rendered me so anxious for your success? Oh, no! if Lord Percival Lorn had had more true patriotism, more power of exerting it than you, do you

not think that I should have been equally anxious for him?"

Grosvenor's vanity was wounded; Lady Anne felt for him; he saw that she did; he did not want *pity*, he did not like it; and he became more tenacious of his own opinion, more resolved to exert it.

"Besides," continued Miss Argyle, "I have known Lord Percival Lorn intimately for some time past,—more intimately than either you, Harry Grosvenor, or myself, could know him from observation, from any thing but experience. I received his character, on trust, from a man on whom you and I have full and perfect reliance,—from the Bishop of ——."

Grosvenor's vanity, pride, tenacity of judgment, were all engaged to retain Lord Percival Lorn in that altitude of opinion, where he had already placed him.

"And this man has completely fascinated you!" said Miss Argyle; "how

dangerous is the beauty of the rattle-snake! — Grosvenor, if once you get within the sphere of his influence, you are lost! Oh, may you never have reason to exclaim, 'Iss Argyle prophesied too truly.'"

"Miss Argyle's estimate of Lord Percival Lorn is correct; — Miss Argyle's estimates genetally are so," said Lord Montague, in a tone that had met Miss Argyle's ear but once before — scarcely *then* so forcible as now — on the night of the thunder-storm.

It thrilled on her senses — it agitated her heart — it crimsoned her cheek. Lord Montague observed the effect; and whatever emotion it excited in him, he resumed instantly his usual quiet superiority of manner.

CHAP. X.

"Each look, each motion, waked a new-born grace,
That o'er her form its transient glory cast;
Some lovelier wonder soon usurped the place,
Chased by a charm still lovelier than the last."
MASON.

ON the following morning, the Bishop left Mr. Walworth's for his Palace at —; Sir Thomas and Lady Clervaux set off for their *exhibition* in London, attended by Lady Anne de Burgh, as the bride-maid of the lady, and accompanied by Mr. Grosvenor, who was going to prepare for taking his seat in Parliament, notice having been given, that the House would meet immediately.

Miss Argyle was going to reside for some time with Mr. Walworth and his sister; Lord Montague was wandering from place to place in search of new objects, on which his mighty genius could

expatiate; he had no settled goal to attain; no positive time of action; Mr. Walworth was pleased with his society, and felt all the honour and dignity it conferred on himself; he pressed Lord Montague's continuance at his seat, with the zeal of one who had the success of his suit at heart. Lord Montague would not deny a respectable old man, and a most valuable member of society, a real gratification which he could confer, by the sacrifice of a very small portion of his time. *Was* it a sacrifice to continue in the same house as Miss Argyle?

Lord Montague did not ask his own heart this question; he, rather, studiously avoided framing it. It is true he was continually deliberating on the great question "*married or single?*" but he would not allow—perhaps he had not discovered, that Miss Argyle was at all taken into consideration in the calculations he had formed, of the probable advantages, that a determination to learn something, in some shape, during his

residence at Mr. Walworth's, might obtain for him.

Lord Montague resumed his usual occupations of shooting, reading, writing remarks, and cultivating, in moments of perfect leisure, those minor talents with which nature had endowed him. Miss Argyle discovered quickly, and without any pain, that she was not considered of sufficient importance to interfere in any manner with his arrangements; and she quietly resumed her own usual employments and recreations, and the exercise of her own enlarged and benevolent views for the improvement of the comforts of the neighbouring, numerous poor.

But there are times in which two people living in the same house, and not studiously avoiding each other, cannot fail of being associated intimately, in many plans. The breakfast-hour was always anxiously expected by Lord Montague, as a season of particular pleasure and enjoyment; and yet not a day past,

that this very hour did not afford him matter for uncomfortable reflection. The whole morning afterwards, whatever might be his occupation, however attentively his mind might be pursuing some other theme, or engaged in the developement of some abstract subject, his memory would continually revert to something Miss Argyle had said to him, or some remark he had made which she had applauded, or some opinion in which they had both agreed,—to some particular inflection of voice, turn of the eye, action of the hand, or gesture of the body. The idea of her once excited in his heart, dwelt there, and all his power, all his decision, all his energy of character, could not efface the impression. Lord Montague soon discovered that his heart, or, as he called it, his *fancy*, dwelt on her more than his reason liked: he began, in time, to suspect, that "*married or single?*" was a question as well adapted to his own peculiar case, as to the world at large. "But I am not in love;" thought

Lord Montague. No, *not* in love; but any other man with the same feelings would have been: it was because his character was so powerful, and his mind so stupendous, that that which would have been the extreme of love in another, was not *quite* love in him.

There are innumerable trifling instances, that mark the rise of this empire in a man's heart; be he even *such* a man as Lord Montague.

It happened that Lord Montague went into a room that was considered his own study, and into which many books had been removed, for his convenience, from the very extensive library that occupied all the under story of one wing in this mansion. Lord Montague came to search for a passage in BURKE on "the Sublime and Beautiful," which Miss Argyle had condemned; and for another in his work on "the French Revolution," which she had applauded almost with enthusiasm. Lord Montague took the book, examined it carefully, closed it in disappointment,

and after a deliberation that occupied even an indefinite space of time, carried it into the library. He found there one exactly similar to it, which he exchanged for his own; carried it back with him in triumph, read and re-read, with delight, the passages that had been pointed out to him; and the disappointment and the delight were occasioned by Miss Argyle's having noticed them, and placed a mark of approbation against them, in that book which he had last obtained!

When Lord Montague discovered his motive, a smile and heightened colour affected his countenance; "I shall not marry," said he decidedly, and threw down the volume in disdain; he paced the apartment three or four times; "and yet," thought he, resuming his seat and book, "and yet—— but oh! where shall I find *that* enthusiasm? Cold, cold, incapable of any thing but friendship or esteem,—her mind too innocent to be agitated by passion; 'the cold in clime are cold in blood:'—oh, Isadora! born under a

warmer sun, what might'st thou not have been?"

Isadora! — it was the first time Lord Montague had ever breathed the name, even in thought. What a delightful familiarity it seemed instantly to inspire! what tender associations it gave rise to!

"Isadora!" sighed he: — what lover who has first pronounced the name of his object, — what female who has heard herself so addressed, for the first time, by the lips she loves best, — but remembers the glow, the bliss, the tenderness of the moment?

It is a feeling to be dwelt on, — to be carefully remembered; every tone of the voice, every throbbing of the pulse, of the heart, to be recollected with incalculable minuteness; the memory of it sufficient to bestow a bliss on many, many periods of after life, when the impetuosity of youth ebbs, when the feelings gradually are softened and blended with prudence and reason; potent to revive tenderness, and to recall all the

ecstacy of the first moments of reciprocal love, when years have worn off the beautiful gloss of those early, endearing impressions.

" I am *not* in love! or I could not sit down to Burke so quietly!" and Lord Montague opening the book, read earnestly for half an hour, till he got to the paragraph, " It is now sixteen or seven-" teen years since I saw the queen of " France, then the dauphiness, at Ver-" sailles; and surely never lighted on " this orb, which she hardly seemed to " touch, a more delightful vision. I saw " her just above the horizon, decorating " and cheering the elevated sphere she " just began to move in, — glittering " like the morning-star, full of life, and " splendour, and joy." — " Oh, Isadora! what a picture!" sighed Lord Montague again, and he discovered at that moment, that, although he had been reading intently during the preceding half hour, he had attended to nothing until he came to this passage, — and that the

associated idea of Miss Argyle had aroused his attention even then.

"*I saw her like the morning-star*," continued he, "all brilliant and beautiful, soft and dewy. And is she *like the morning-star*, a *sun* to other spheres, — to me *glittering* and *beautiful* only, — to *others*, the source of warmth, of heat, of life? — Oh, Isadora! and *art* thou like thy own star of the morning in *this* respect also? And *does* thy enthusiasm but sleep to awake in full, in improved vigour, for another? I will *not* love!"—And closing the volume, with proud and determined steps he walked out, spurning the idea of bestowing his powerful heart on one who *might* love another! *Another* preferred! What a new, what an overwhelming possibility, to be admitted by him, who had in vain traversed Europe to meet with a man to whom he was superior in nothing!

"And *love* another — and *be* thy love happy!" said he; and, as if the recollection of all he had ever seen worthy of admiration in Miss Argyle would perfect

the disinterestedness of his feelings, he paced with regular and firm steps that part of the grounds which he had once traversed with her.

Lord Montague walked on with head erect, appearing, and wishing to think that he surveyed every beautiful scene around with interest, yet, in reality, seeing nothing.

The base of a chain of picturesque mountains that ran across the county, came within a short distance of Mr. Walworth's grounds. To these Lord Montague bent his steps, and ascending in a regular direction he arrived at the summit. He looked around, determined to enjoy the prospect, and he *did* enjoy it.

This hill was separated from the rest by a stream that washed its base, and after fertilising the country for about a mile and a half, meandered through the mountains; but on the contrary side to that which overlooked the Walworth demesnes, rather higher up than half the

ascent, a piece of rock jutted out, exactly in a line with an inferior hill, and united to it by a narrow ill-contrived plank, which formed a passage of about six feet. Beneath this dashed the river, whose current was at its greatest rapidity just at this point. On this unsafe bridge was an airy form, whose robes of autumnal green, waved by the same breeze that wantoned with her uncovered locks, gave her the appearance of that goddess whose colour she wore. She was assisting an aged, decrepit female over this dangerous passage, which she effected with equal care and safety. With steps bounding and graceful as the antelope's, she retraced her way, took up the old woman's burden which had been left on the opposite summit, and which from her now slackened pace appeared almost too heavy for one unaccustomed to such tasks.

"Stop, Miss Argyle, it is too much, I will assist you," exclaimed Lord Montague, bounding down the hill as he did so.

"God of heaven!" was his next exclamation; — he no longer bounded, — he flew.

His address had caused Miss Argyle to start; — oppressed by the burden she bore, she lost her equilibrium, and was precipitated into the stream below.

The grateful object of her succour screamed with frantic violence, "save her for the love of man — for the love of God!"

"I *will* save her, or perish with her!" said Lord Montague; and running along the banks of the river with the velocity of lightning, he plunged in where the current began to ebb, and whither Miss Argyle had been borne by its violence.

He recovered her body; he gained the shore; — regardless of the joyful cries, the blessings, the praises, of the old woman, he bore Miss Argyle along with all the rapidity he could use. Her pallid cheek lay on his shoulder; — "beautiful in death!" thought he, and his own paled with the idea, "If she be but

saved!" The violence of the motion of Lord Montague had given the current of life its usual flow;—her cheek faintly bloomed;—she half opened her eyes. "Isadora—oh, Isadora!" said Lord Montague passionately, and he pressed her more closely to his breast.—Her eyes closed again;—her cheek lost its recently acquired bloom;—the pulsation of her heart ceased;—Lord Montague flew on in frantic agony,—"she *is* dead!—my own Isadora!"

With the most tender, the most impassioned exclamations, he called on her name.—"If not in life, in *death* thou shalt be mine!—oh, wanting in nothing but in enthusiasm,—in the cold grave—oh, Isadora!"—That voice uttering that name, smote on the ear which death seemed to have deafened: Miss Argyle revived as he rushed into the house.

Mrs. Penelope Walworth had seen their approach up the avenue; she rushed into the hall, scarcely able to articulate, "When—for God's sake—where—

my lord — Miss Ar — Isa — how — for Heaven's sake, my lord."

"Miss Argyle assisting an old woman over the plank — bounding those mountains — fell — I — had — happiness — save her — life returned!" said Lord Montague in an agony of agitation that shook his frame.

Mrs. Walworth, with maternal solicitude, assisted the breathless Lord Montague to convey the sufferer to her apartment. There, resigning her entirely to Mrs. Walworth's care, he retreated with hasty steps to his own.

He threw himself on his bed; — "My God! — I love her then! — and I could have died for her — with her — any thing rather than exist without the possibility of seeing her, hearing her, — *loving* her! — so short a time since the commencement of our acquaintance! — I who have seen so much of woman — all that is admirable and amiable in them have seen *with* admiration, but with nothing more till now! — And thou, Isadora — thou,

with thy marble coldness, and unimpassioned indifference — thou hast lighted up this flame in my bosom, which time *cannot* — if thou *art* so cold—by Heaven, I *will* extinguish it!" —.

Lord Montague rose hastily from his bed — changed his dress, which he had hitherto neglected, and taking two or three turns to compose himself, descended into Mrs. Walworth's sitting-room.

"I have persuaded Miss Argyle to repose herself quietly to-day, that no ill-effects may arise from her immersion," said this most benevolent of old maids, endeavouring to conceal a tear in a smile, and to disperse the traces of the alarm she had suffered, by an air and a tone of raillery.

"I hope Miss Argyle is not worse than might be expected," said Lord Montague, with as much quiet friendliness of manner as he could contrive to assume.

"The agitation of the moment overcame her as much as the accident itself,

that agitation increased too by her gratitude to her deliverer, a powerful sentiment, my lord, to one of her strong feelings."

"*Gratitude!* I thought so!" said Lord Montague to himself, with a feeling of disappointment and anger, for which he was disposed to be angry with himself.

"Strong feelings!" answering Mrs. Walworth: "strong feelings, madam! Miss Argyle is capable of every thing that is good — perhaps great — of the most lively friendship, most finished gratitude:" a slight emphasis of impatience on the word '*gratitude*;' — "but *strong feelings!* my dear madam, recollect these imply ardency of mind, enthusiasm of character — almost too much of human nature to be the attributes of a mind so truly *philosophised* as Miss Argyle's!"

"*Not strong feelings!* deny Isadora Argyle's claim to *strong feelings!* my dear lord, you do not know her, you do not understand her."

"I wish I thought so," said Lord Montague to himself a second time.

"Oh, if you knew," continued Mrs. Walworth, with energy, "if I did but dare to tell you the innumerable instances that prove her claim to that without which woman, with the best understanding, the best principles, is a statue, a book to be read, to be admired, but not a being to be loved!"

"I agree with you entirely, madam; not to be loved, certainly: it is not safe for a man who possesses and values enthusiasm, to marry a woman who has it not!"

"I was not thinking of marriage, when I said that a woman who had not strong feelings was not to be loved; I intended to imply friendship only."

"How fond these women are of *friendship!*" said Lord Montague mentally, and with some petulance.

"If I could but tell you how much Miss Argyle deserves your admiration for the *strength of her feelings!* One

instance only! listen, my dear lord, and repent of your injustice.

"A very distant relation of our's died, leaving one daughter, portionless, friendless, and more unfortunate still—beautiful. Our branch of the family had always been at variance with their's; but there is no resisting the appeal death makes to us all! in short, Emma came to *us*. About the same time our own nephew, Arthur Walworth, came from the continent; I have told you that Emma was beautiful, and Arthur soon discovered also that she was amiable, and *aimable*. He loved her, she loved, we consented, and Miss Argyle came down. Lovely as Emma was, there was something so superior in Miss Argyle's mind, that Arthur, who possessed powerful talents, discovered that she was more cultivated than Emma. Matters not having yet proceeded too far for him to recede with honour, he devoted himself to Miss Argyle, and Emma felt that she was neglected, and, what was

better, endured that neglect properly. Miss Argyle, who had no suspicion of the real state of affairs, did not restrain that friendship with which Arthur had inspired her."

"*Friendship!*" Lord Montague rose, walked to the window, and threw himself on another seat.

"It was very plain," continued Mrs. Walworth, "that Miss Argyle admired Arthur,—he was a man to be admired and to be loved; a stronger sentiment might have arisen, but Miss Argyle discovered the state of Emma's heart, the impending treaty which *she* had broken off; then Isadora showed herself; she prepared instantly — when we knew it was most inconvenient to herself — for her departure. She did not remonstrate one word with Arthur, for she knew enough of the sex, my lord, to be aware that in affairs of the heart they are most tenacious of their prerogative of unrestricted choice. She more wisely suffered matters to fall of themselves into that train, from which

her arrival disturbed them. What generosity! she crushed a dawning attachment for a worthy object, — she sacrificed an equal alliance, —she gave up the happy prospect of a home at a time shortly after her father's death, when most she felt the need of one, — she quitted a house, which, I have pride and satisfaction in saying, afforded her the first hours of comfort after that melancholy event — and all, because placing herself in Emma's situation, she felt that such conduct on her part was proper and desirable. The effect proved the justice of her conclusions; Arthur, after a time spent in vain regret after Miss Argyle, returned to Emma; —they were married, are happy, most happy; and they owe their felicity to Miss Argyle! Oh! my lord, if this do not prove her claim to be considered the possessor of *strong feelings*, of the *strongest feelings*, tell me what does?"

"This does *not*, my dear madam, certainly; it demonstrates *strength of mind*,

generosity, *self-command;* but has nothing to do with *strong feeling*."

"And is not great generosity *strong feeling* — *very* strong feeling?"

"No, it is not, indeed: it is *good* feeling, *admirable* feeling; but it does not prove Miss Argyle's claim to *strong feelings*."

"But it appears that our apprehension of the term differs; that is a point on which much depends: strong feelings, according to your lordship, are ——"

"Are general enthusiasm of manner — are — in short, and openly, they are, with reference to love, and they bear more on that point than on any other, devotedness of heart, an absorbing of the soul's energies, 'the will to do, the soul to dare' any thing for that man, to sacrifice for him home, country, life even — every thing but *fame;* — I allow that a virtuous woman can neither sacrifice her fame *nor* her virtue to him ——"

"In other words, your lordship by *strong feelings* appears to signify *passion:*

whether Isadora Argyle is capable of that, I have yet had no opportunity of proving."

"Then she has *not* loved!" said Lord Montague, anxiously.

"I think not: from the affection she bears to her friends, we may reasonably calculate what love will be, when it affects her."

"Will not the dissipation of her affections amongst so many, rather tend to weaken the force of that master passion?"

"I think not."

"I fear so," sighed Lord Montague.

"No, no; I know of what Miss Argyle is capable; I know what woman is when her soul is sublimed by this passion; and Miss Argyle is almost the perfection of woman!"

"*When* she feels it—but who can thaw the ice that surrounds her?"

"The man only who deserves her, certainly."

"What power must he possess who can warm that frigid coldness!"

"Coldness!—if Miss Argyle's manners appear cold to your lordship, I perceive that what I should call enthusiasm you would denominate mere *capability* of feeling."

"She has sometimes—yes, *I* have seen her elevated by enthusiasm of manner; but then it has been something more than man, or the work of man, that has excited it."

"You grant then that powerful causes *do* excite in her enthusiasm of manner. Her manners are too natural to spring from any other source than her feeling at the moment: consequently, they are the effect of enthusiasm of character. Does not this prove to you, that when an object is found — elevated, and sublime, and excellent he must be, I grant you — she will love him with an enthusiasm of affection of which many are incapable."

"It will be for her happiness that she should!—if, indeed, the existence of that enthusiasm of which you spoke could be proved!"

"You doubt it, my lord, because you

have seen it so seldom, or because its expression has not been strong enough to awaken your attention. It is seldom, indeed, that Miss Argyle's enthusiasm of character imparts itself to her manner: it is impossible to enumerate the instances in which they have existed separately. I do not admire general enthusiasm of manner, because even if it be the effect of enthusiasm of character, its frequent exertion destroys its power over the minds of others, and weakens the cause:—if it *be* not that effect, it is hypocrisy or affectation."

"The inconsistency of Miss Argyle's manner—"

"Is inconsistency of manner merely, and not of character, induced by her superiority to the generality of beings who surround her. It surprises me that the accurately observing Lord Montague has not distinguished this!"

"After all," said Lord Montague, retiring from this conference—"*married or single?*"—is she, or is she not capable of enthusiasm?"—

CHAP. XI.

"Love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious . . . ."

MILTON.

"If falsehood like truth had but one face, we should be upon better terms, for we should then take the contrary of what the liar says for certain truth."

MONTAIGNE.

LORD Montague hastened into the breakfast-parlour, impatient to see Miss Argyle, and more disappointed than he chose to allow himself, on being told by Mr. Walworth, that she was breakfasting with his sister, in her own *boudoir*.

Lord Montague retired into his own study, as soon as decency permitted; — he began to read! —

"I cannot," said he, in a few minutes throwing the book from him; —

"how will she look, I wonder—how feel—how speak?—*Gratitude!*—yes, excessive *gratitude*—I believe her capable of the very enthusiasm of it: but love—intenseness of affection—devotedness of feeling—is not in her *nature*—it is a sublimity to which she cannot attain: oh, why will she waste all her enthusiasm on minor subjects,—why does she not reserve its whole, collective force, for a more important end?—Isadora, I *could*, but *dare* not love thee!"—and having drawn this conclusion, he very wisely resolved to dare the power of the most subduing associations, by walking to the spot where he had saved Miss Argyle's life.

Depressed, and feeling more deeply than ever his isolated state, he arrived within a few yards of the fatal place.—What a sight!—Miss Argyle stood there again, in the very dress, the very attitude, in which she had at first attracted his attention yesterday: she was in the act of describing the precise situation

from which she fell, to the attentive and anxiously-listening Mrs. Walworth.

Lord Montague's head became dizzy; the impulse—the powerful impulse of the moment, hurried him to her side;—he had thrown his protecting arms round her, and had borne her to a more secure situation, before he recollected what aspect this action might assume.

But Lord Montague seldom suffered his presence of mind so completely to forsake him, and never for a long period. "I beg your pardon, Miss Argyle," he said, with as much cool tranquillity as possible: "your appearance—your attitude—could not but remind me of the accident of yesterday."

His manner surprised, perhaps disappointed Miss Argyle; at least, it restored to her that composure of which his solicitude had deprived her. She thanked him with dignity, with calmness, but with gratitude.

"*Enthusiasm!!*—Good God!" said he mentally; then aloud, "I have no

claim either to your gratitude or thanks, Miss Argyle: the man who could stand quietly and see a human being on the very verge of death, would deserve to be branded for a villain."

Whatever gratitude, whatever feelings stronger than gratitude Lord Montague had excited in Miss Argyle, this ungracious manner of declaring to her that her life was of no other value in his eyes than as being that of a creature whose frame was organised like his own, stifled them. Miss Argyle, with proud humility, *repeated* her thanks, and asserted her claim to have credit for *that* gratitude, which must affect *any* person in her situation.

" Wave the *gratitude*, and let us meet once again on equal terms," Lord Montague could have said; but he confined the sentiment to his own breast.

And here apparently ended that important affair, on which Lord Montague had calculated more confidently than he was aware; which, he certainly hoped

and expected, would elicit from Miss Argyle *some* spark of enthusiasm: unwilling to allow, or rather unconscious, that the coldness of his own manner had checked the warmth of her's, and chilled the ardour of her feelings to him.

But though no immediate consequences resulted from it, it insensibly threw them more together; it was a sort of attaching tie between them, that led them to converse more intimately; that gave, in short, an air of friendship to their intercourse, which their merely residing in the same house would not have bestowed.

There were times when Lord Montague could not avoid shrinking from the *equalizing* manner in which Miss Argyle spoke of human nature. When she used the term "*mankind*" in the abstract, it was obvious that *woman* was generalised under this head. She drew a line of marked distinction between the sexes only when she spoke of their habits or decorums. In their intellectual *capa-*

bilities, she appeared to consider them equal; in their *acquirements*, she knew that man must, from opportunity, be superior.

When in Miss Argyle's presence, he was happy in that unrestrained friendliness that appeared in her manner to him; but when alone, the more he reflected on it, the more he insisted that it proved the general quiet tone of her feelings:— "and if I *were*—if, having decided that I should be happier married than single, a question on which I have yet many existing doubts—if I *were* to select her as my object, would she not give herself to me, because she has yet seen nothing of the world, or because she would not hesitate to *sacrifice* the remaining part of her life to him who had saved it! *Sacrifice!*—my God! Am I to receive a *victim* at the altar, instead of a willing bride, whose enthusiasm would respond to my own?"—and then, unable to bear his own reflections, he would return to Miss Argyle, and forget, in the de-

light her original manners, her noble simplicity of character afforded him, that he had any cause to be dissatisfied with her.

But though Lord Montague's heart beat with no quiet pulse, its tumultuous throbbing was completely concealed by his manner. All-indifferent as he seemed, all-superior to the common affections that agitate man in general, it is not wonderful that Miss Argyle's calmness was really the effect of her feelings.

His character baffled her observation, the state of his heart defied her penetration. She wished to discover some of the springs that affected him—to obtain an insight into his character—to comprehend him. But Lord Montague, without bearing about him any appearance of mystery, was *not* to be comprehended; and Miss Argyle contentedly profited by his conversation, and improved her knowledge of the human character by listening to his remarks,

and comparing them with her own experience.

A severe cold, which prevented her enjoying her usual walks and recreations, by rendering her more dependent on her friends for amusement, insensibly identified her occupations with those of Lord Montague. He read to her, and he marked with indefatigable attention the play of her countenance as she listened to any particular passage. "She has a fine imagination!" he would say, when her countenance reflected the whole force of their author's idea. Once only, when he had been reading a powerful description of the force of conjugal devotion, Miss Argyle had hung in breathless expectation on the narrative, — on the adieu of the dying wife, who had received her death-wound in defence of her lord. He looked at her for a moment; her whole countenance expressed most forcibly, "Oh! *I* could have done thus!" — "She *is* capable of enthusiasm! — *Wonderful!*" thought Lord Montague, un-

consciously breathing the last word in a tone somewhat stronger than a whisper.

"Not *wonderful*—only *admirable;*" said Miss Argyle, supposing the expression alluded to the narrative, and resuming instantly her usual manner.

Never had Lord Montague been so near opening his whole heart to her; never did a change in her countenance so completely disappoint him.

But Miss Argyle's usual luxuriance of health returned; and, after two months passed in great intimacy, each resumed their usual occupations, entirely independent of those of the other.

It seemed as if they were like asymptotes in geometry, always approaching, and yet never to meet.

Lord Montague found himself debating more intently, and more frequently than ever, on the celebrated proposition of the love casuists, "*An Formosa sit ducenda?*"

Miss Argyle described to Mrs. Walworth the impression she had received of

Lord Montague's character, in those words applied to a celebrated poet of the present day — "His soul seems as if it were a particle of fire separated from the sun, and is always fluttering to get back to that source of light and heat." And this impression was confirmed by an accident that occurred at this period.

In the *general* library, as it was now called, in contradistinction to Lord Montague's, Miss Argyle frequently spent her mornings. On such an occasion, having completed the volume in which she had been engaged, she took up another, of the same size and the same binding, supposing that it formed a part of that series which she had already commenced. But on opening it, she found that it was a collection of manuscript poems, loose ideas, and metaphysical discussions. The page before her was occupied by a "*Sonnet to an injured Lady.*"

" There is a couch, where beauty wakes to weep,
And heartfelt anguish dims an eye as bright
As yonder star, that trembles o'er the deep,
And sheds its lustre on the brow of night.
Ah me! it is a sad and painful sight,
When youth and beauty bend beneath distress!
Yet Heaven, we know, will give the injured right,
And all those keen, oppressive wrongs redress,
Which thou hast felt! – Nay, start not, lovely fair,
Nor blush to think that half thy woe is known:
Thine are those ills that might induce despair,
Since every earthly hope's for ever flown.—
But weep not, sink not o'er the cup that's given;
One friend is with thee still—thy God in
Heaven!"

Miss Argyle turned to the title-page; on it was inscribed simply, "*Algernon Fitzroy, Earl of Montague, Viscount Arlingham, &c. &c.*"—"It is *his!*" thought she: "characterised by the same mournful tenderness that distinguished the Greek sonnet, it once before was my fate to discover! Is this '*injured lady*' a creature of reality whose misfortunes he pities, or an imaginary being, whose name he uses as an object on which he can pour those feelings in private, which never appear publicly? And this man, with every thing that others would give

a life to attain — with all of rank, character, talent, mind, soul, that can exalt or sublime humanity — this man is *not* happy!" And sighing deeply, she proceeded to the next sonnet, written in a different hand, addressed "*to the Waiter at Vauxhall.*"

" Say, canst thou bring what fabling poets feign,
The oblivious draught from Lethe's sable stream?
Then might my restless soul its peace regain,
Or sleep, unconscious of life's feverish dream!
The past might be as it had never been,
Nor could remembrance claim the bitter tear;
Then might I rush to join yon festive scene,
With mirth unfettered, and without a fear:
Then long lost pleasure I again might feel,
And scorn each gift delusive Hope could bring;
Each wound now rankling in my heart would heal,
And Fancy blossom in perpetual spring. —
But, perhaps, this Lethe may be all a tale;
So, harkye, Waiter! bring a glass of ale!"

It was impossible for any thing to characterize Lord Montague's tone of feeling more distinctly than this latter sonnet. It is from trifles that we gather the clearest insight into the mind of man. Never before had Miss Argyle so nearly estimated his feelings, — never before

had she comprehended the unfortunate state of that man's mind, who had seen too much of the world to be satisfied with common qualities, or general endowments.

"Oh, if he *did* but love!—Love alone can give him that happiness of which his nature is capable!" thought Miss Argyle; and self-love never, for an instant, pointed out the probable, the proper object.

"I have received," said Mr. Walworth, one morning at breakfast, "I have just received a most ridiculous, and, at the same time, a most satisfactory letter from that whimsical character, Surrey.—Miss Argyle will perhaps oblige us by reading it."

She took it instantly: it ran as follows:

"*To ——— Walworth, Esq.*

"DEAR SIR, London.

"Have left a blank for the Christian-name, not being aware of it; your answer will please to inform me, as I

could tell several good stories of the accidents that such an omission has occasioned; — but, unfortunately, all the paper *fit* to write on so d—d small, and I have a budget of important news for you; — always obliged to be the correspondent for my friends, so have got a sort of *knack* of it, as Lord R. H. used to say of his horse, that continually threw him. Lord R. H. once returned for the county of ——— by a political manœuvre — to say the best of it dishonourable, and threw out poor old Philip K——, and so ruined him. I hear his lordship is terribly out at the elbows, which must certainly be a great satisfaction to every charitably-disposed person. It is whispered, that he once attempted to cut his own throat; I am sure I would have obliged him by holding the candle, which is the only favour I could possibly do him, my principles being so opposite, and I shall not sacrifice my principles to any body, not even to common sense, as Miss Wode-

house said the other day; for I see her continually, as her brother Anthony Wodehouse, Esquire, a capital Nabob, from the neighbourhood of Munnypour, —d——h bad name for a place, I don't intend ever to go there — *resides in Portland-square*, and gives capital dinners, which reminds me to say that I have sent your old Alderman the turtles I promised, notwithstanding Lord Percival Lorn says it is very ridiculous, for nobody thinks of redeeming that honour they pledge at elections. I can assure you Lord Percival Lorn is quite the head in Bond-street,—*fashion-settler*, and all that, nothing to be got off unless he patronises it, from a pretty woman to a new stirrup, which last article is arrived to great perfection, as well as cravat stiffeners, and *hunting-belts*, the latter got d—'d common, keeping the vulgar persons of plebeian tradesmen and half-pay officers in form, all looking like Asmodeus's man, who slept incased in iron, I think, to preserve his flexibility of figure;—d——h good that, vote me a

bore if it is not! Talking of bores, Lord Percival Lorn says, that Parliament is certainly the greatest, and the most annoying to a man of fashion, and I assure you no other men seem good for any thing here but men of fashion. Grosvenor's getting quite the *ton*, because Lady Jane Lorn,—by the by, I think Lady Jane a confoundedly fine woman, as indeed every body on *our* side the town says, and nobody here visits in the ultimate east;—I incline to imagine that one great reason why we people of *ton* sleep by day and shine by night, is on account of the sun's vulgarity in appearing first in the east, and nothing tolerable to be found there but nabobs, jewels, and sweetmeats, excepting perhaps Cashmere shawls, and Chinese crapes: I should think if there be any truth in the theory 'that all matter has an idea,' the sun will one day or other have the sense to behave a little more politely and inverse its present order. A very clever fellow of my acquaintance got *queered* the other day by another

superlatively clever friend of mine about that very thing; I don't mean about the sun, but about all matter having an idea: 'I conclude,' says he, 'that every thing is capable of an idea!'—'oh, aye, I understand you perfectly,' answers my other friend; 'you mean to say that the sun has the wit to see he enjoys the best place, and the moon feels obliged to him for his patronage; truly a very luminous system!' quite a Joe Miller, my dear sir! But, as I was saying, Grosvenor is getting quite the *ton*, because Lady Jane Lorn has discovered that one of the Elgin marbles is modelled on his cast of figure, and that his foot is particularly classic, so that his shoe-maker is now employed by every body; a very good thing for him, for he was quite low, and Grosvenor saved him from prison, to which place he was being conveyed when he chanced to meet our friend, who recollected him a boy in his father's service: the man had a large family, and all that sort of thing, and Grosvenor employed him directly, which

amused Lord Percival Lorn excessively, who with myself witnessed the whole transaction. But when the classic foot got noised abroad, and such things soon get talked of in *our* circle, then Lord Percival employed him too, and every body else who is any thing in the line. People talk a good deal about Grosvenor's being engaged to Lady Anne de Burgh, but Lady Jane Lorn laughs at it, and declares the thing to be demonstrably impossible. And I confess I think so too; for Lady Anne goes out very little, and is not at all the fashion, which Lady Jane certainly is: I used to think Lady Anne a 'handsome woman *in the country*;' but in London, where fashion is every thing, she appears quite another thing. Lady Clervaux gets on famously, and her parties are considered *au haut du ton*:—Lord Percival is always her Cecisbeo in company, and her Cicerone to any places she chooses to see; and Sir Thomas lets Lady Jane drive him in his curricle or barouche, for I assure you she is

a famous four-in-hand — a favour which his coachman never enjoyed yet. Grosvenor is a good deal in favour with the Duke of ——, Lord Percival's brother; which is the greater honour, because his Grace admits very few people to his intimacy: he is a very pompous kind of personage, and for my own part, I must avow I do not like him at all, though he has got me in for one of his Boroughs which cost me but four thousand pounds. I gave him the money, and he *executed the job* without any trouble to me, a very good thing, for I am tired of election bustles; — I always vote, of course, in the Duke's party, consequently against the ministry, as his Grace and Lord Percival assure me every man of principle must do. Miss Wodehouse is of the same opinion, which is a matter of some consequence, because she ranks at the head of a party against the *bas bleux;* — Lady Anne is rather a *bas bleu* — reads Milton, and all that sort of thing, which is now quite out. I was sorry Grosvenor voted

against us the other day; Lord Percival Lorn spoke at great length on *our* side the question, and I thought completely did away with any arguments the opposite side of the House might think of offering. But Grosvenor chose that time to make his maiden speech, which his friends admired very much, and which certainly caused great sensation. I send it you in the *only* paper in which it is detailed at full length, and which I do not remember to have seen at your place. It is certainly good as a whole, but I think you will find two or three of the most brilliant ideas imaginable, as Lady Jane Lorn calls them, couched in very ill-arranged periods. Miss Argyle once said—and I thought it at the time so good a thing that I wrote it down, which I generally do when I hear any thing that takes particularly, because, as Miss Argyle said on another occasion, 'the faculty of judgment may be exercised almost at any time, but no art has yet been discovered, that can elicit, at will, the operation of

the fancy:' — but I was going to observe, that Miss Argyle once said, 'that fine ideas, expressed in inadequate language by a celebrated author, are like thatched houses in a well-built town, — however exalted the merit of the tenants, the taste of the tenements themselves is contemptible:' — and it strikes me, that this applies particularly to some parts of Grosvenor's speech. — By the by, I would not have Miss Argyle come to London, because she has always been accustomed to first consideration in the country, and as she has a dash of the *bas bleu* in her, she would be nothing with *our* set: and I assure you *we* are the only people not absolutely Goths, as the celebrated Duchess of —— says, just returned from Paris. —— I thought you would be glad to know how Grosvenor was getting on, and all that, which you can communicate to my Lord Bishop if you please; but as I have not the least acquaintance with him, I cannot, of course, think of writing to him. — I have

filled two sheets closely, but it is of no consequence, as I now frank my own letters, a great consideration to a man of my extensive correspondence.— I don't think I shall ever give myself the trouble to speak in Parliament, unless I try a champagne experiment. — Compliments to Mrs Walworth, Miss Argyle, and my Lord Montague, if he is yet with you. — I wonder why he does not take his seat amongst the Peers; — perhaps he is no orator, and imagines that they all speak in the upper house; — but I am assured, on credible authority, that there are as many mutes there, as with us.

"I am, dear sir,
"your obliged, humble servant,
"Edward Surrey."

Miss Argyle threw the voluminous letter on the table, without a single word of comment, and eagerly seizing the newspaper, read aloud Grosvenor's maiden speech.

Pathos, energy of voice and of manner, graceful articulation, perfect comprehension, gave its recital all the advantages that Grosvenor himself could have desired. It occupied three columns, and it well deserved the space the editor had given to it — a great deal to say, in the opinion of the constant readers of diurnal papers.

"Exquisite! admirable! matchless in sentiment and expression, in idea and language!" said Miss Argyle, warmly. "There are some sentences in it more brilliant than any I have heard or read, since that celebrated one which Pitt applied against Fox — 'the honourable gentleman draws on his memory for wit, and on his imagination for argument.' For satire, point, force of language, and elegance of arrangement, that one sentence is a *chef-d'œuvre* of art! Nothing ever came near to it till now."

"The speech is certainly admirable," said Lord Montague, and he took up the paper; but though the words met

his eye, not one reached his understanding.

"She *is* capable of enthusiasm, of the whole force of it, and for Grosvenor!" thought he. "Is it possible! *Have* I, *could* I really love the woman who preferred him, when my own influence was opposed to him? May they be happy!" Lord Montague sighed deeply, laid down the paper, and informed Mr. Walworth that imperious circumstances demanded his immediate departure from ——shire; in short, that that very day would see him on his way to London.

Mr. Walworth attempted to expostulate and entreat; Lord Montague gracefully acknowledged his obligations to his courteous host, for the friendly hospitality that had been extended to him so long; "but unavoidable necessity," he said, "prevented his increasing the already great obligation to Mr. Walworth — obligation that, in his own estimation, was equalled only by his gratitude."

Miss Argyle concealed the change of her countenance by poring over Surrey's letter. When she looked up, no unusual emotion was there; and no word, no look of her's, entreated him to defer his projected departure.

He was resolved to go; "desperate diseases," he reasoned within himself, "required desperate remedies. Though he was not actually in love with Miss Argyle, he was on the very verge of being so; and it was sufficiently obvious that another had all that power over her which he *might have* wished to gain."

From these reflections he determined to remove himself from the object of his *dawning* attachment; sagaciously supposing that the force of love, like that of fire, would decrease in proportion to the squares of the distance.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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